Diversity, Inclusion, and Leadership Resources

The University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Graduate School of Library and Information Science
Center for Digital Inclusion

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*The Center for Digital Inclusion views the concepts of inclusion, diversity, and leadership as inextricably linked. All of these concepts describe ways of relating to both ourselves and other people with the purpose of fostering greater understanding of, and improving, the human condition. As practices, inclusion, diversity, and leadership require that we start with ourselves in examining power and privilege before we attempt to develop an ethics of looking outward to our interactions and relationships with other people. Inclusion, diversity and leadership also require that we examine institutional and structural power as a force that is always operating in conjunction with individual actions.*

These resources are offered in support of fostering linkages between inclusion, diversity, and leadership, and are for use by students as well as by instructors in designing curricula and lesson plans. These resources are not meant to be comprehensive; rather this is a dynamic repository for sharing readings, exercises, and knowledge around diversity, inclusion and leadership in our LIS community.
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Grad School 101

Dis/orienting to GSLIS

Exercise 1: Assumptions About LIS

Brainstorm on board:
- What kinds if assumptions do you have about LIS?
- About the role of LIS work in society?
- About LIS professionals?
- About LIS school?

Reflect:
1. What kinds of values are present in these assumptions?
2. Take stock of your social position (race, class, gender, sexuality) and your privilege. How do these inform the assumptions you have about the role of LIS in society, who serves and is being served, the nature of access to information, and knowledge creation?
3. Go back to the brainstorm and critically question the assumptions put forward. For whom do they benefit? Who is not considered? How is power articulated (i.e. who has it and who does not, how is it used, for what purpose)?
4. How might we continue to challenge the assumptions we have about our work and the order of things, generally?

How to ask for a letter of recommendation

GSLIS alum Dr. Sarah Park authored an excellent blog post on walking students through the process of asking for a letter of recommendation. She covers whom you should ask, how to go about asking, what information to provide to your recommender, and what to do after the letter is written for you. This is valuable practical advice as well as a lesson in academic etiquette.

https://readingspark.wordpress.com/about/letters-of-recommendation/

How to read all those books and articles for graduate school

(Originally blogged by GSLIS doctoral student, Miriam Sweeney at http://miriamsweeney.net/2012/06/20/readforgradschool/)
In graduate school the work load increases and students will find that they are expected to master two or three times the material that they were used to as an undergraduate. This can be intimidating to the point of overwhelming a student into paralysis. Following these tips should help you master your readings instead of the readings mastering you!

1. **Read Strategically, Not Linearly.** Reading for graduate school is different than reading a book for pleasure. When we read for pleasure we often start at the beginning of the book, reading carefully in a linear fashion. If you do this with your academic material, it will take twice as long and it is likely you won’t retain the right kind of information from the reading. *Instead of reading linearly, read strategically.* As an academic reader your job is to mine the text you are reading for information. Instead of cruising along the narrative, you need to dive in, find the information you need, and move along to the next stack of readings for class.

If you are reading a book this means you should look over the table of contents, then read the entire introduction carefully. In academic books, the introduction is where the author states all of their main points, the framework they will use, and an outline of what information will be covered in each chapter. Next, look over the last chapter. This is the conclusion, which will restate the main arguments of the author and will often contextualize these arguments in a broader context, suggest next steps, or speculate solutions or alternatives. From here you can go to the parts of the book you want deeper knowledge about. Individual chapters will be laid out similarly to the book structure with an introduction, and middle and the conclusion. Skimming the beginning and end of the chapter will give you the main points, then you can gather evidence by browsing the middle parts of the chapter. *Remember, you are not really expected to read every single word of the book; your mandate is to understand the author’s main ideas, arguments, and be able to articulate why this discussion matters.*

If you are reading a journal article, start by checking the name of the journal that published the article. This will key you in to the scope and boundaries that the article is working within. Next, carefully read the title and the abstract of the piece. A good abstract should clearly explain the main argument of the article, the kind of evidence the author uses, and a succinct conclusion, or what the author found out. Armed with this information, look over the introduction to see how the author is framing their work, paying attention to the citations they use. This tells you who the author is trying to be in dialogue with. Next, flip to the discussion section. Sometimes this is separate than the conclusion, sometimes not, depending on the disciplinary standards of
the author and journal. Read the discussion and conclusion carefully. These sections will explain the author’s main arguments and the “why you should care” piece. Now you can go back through the article armed by the knowledge of where the author is leading you and browse over methods and results sections. Pay attention particularly to images and data visualizations. Note how these things relate to or support the discussion and conclusion sections you read.

Reading strategically instead of linearly will make you a more efficient and effective academic reader. Getting familiar with how different formats of writing are structured will give you the confidence and control to find the information you need in them more efficiently.

2. **Take Notes!** As you are reading strategically, you absolutely must take notes simultaneously. Otherwise it is guaranteed you will not remember the kinds of details you need to recall in class, in your paper, in your own research down the road. Develop a system of your own whether it is sticking a post-it note in the book and jotting something down, or opening up RefWorks or Zotero, or Word and throwing some notes down as you read. Whatever you do, remember that future you will have NO IDEA what present you is thinking, no matter how brilliant a thought it is. *Be specific, include detailed citations and pages numbers for direct quotes so you don’t have to chase them later.*

If you are reading as preparation for a class, make sure you are also jotting down 3-5 questions, observations, or provocations that you can use in class for participation. In grad school, everyone is expected to participate on a high level, so have something to say ahead of time to avoid the high-blood pressure that comes from your professor’s cold, hard stare.

3. **Be purposeful.** Being purposeful in your readings means that as you are moving strategically through the text you are also being deliberate about what you want to glean from the reading, what are meant to glean, and how this fits with the other readings and conversations you have had in class, along with your own life experiences. *Ask yourself, “What is the author trying to say? What is motivating her exploration of this topic? What does this research contribute? What academic conversations is the author trying to align with? What are the main arguments of this piece? How does this relate to my other assigned readings?”* Going in with these questions in mind will focus you as you read and aid you in pulling out the most relevant information.

4. **A Critical Perspective.** Lastly, applying a critical perspective in your reading is helpful for situating a reading in broader contexts. Contrary to how it sounds, being critical does not simply mean being negative
or criticizing wantonly. Critical perspectives are those that trace and name flows of power: Who has power and who does not? Who benefits from particular social arrangements, and whom do they marginalize? Critical perspectives also question assumptions and values that are implicit in arguments: What values are underlying this work? What experiences and perspectives do these values privilege? How might centering different values or experiences reframe the argument or conversation? Asking questions like this will help you have deeper conversations about your readings, and really, isn’t that the whole point of graduate school?

Other resources:

A post by Tara Kuther, Ph.D. on About.com giving study tips for graduate school: “Graduate School versus College: You’ll Need Different Study Skills”

Writing Resources

UIUC Writer’s Workshop
The UIUC Writer’s Workshop provides free writing consultations and writing assistance from student editors. You can bring your work at any stage of the writing process and get feedback on your work.
http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/

Resources for Writers
Provided by the UIUC Writer’s Workshop, this site provides resources for writers including a grammar handbook, citation styles, ESL resources, and writing tips.
http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/

Professional Resources

Job-seeking Resources

Frequently Asked Interview Questions
(Compiled by students at the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Carolina)

LISjobs.com has library-specific resume-writing advice as well as job advertisements and career-development information.
Salary Negotiation

In 2008, Emerita Dean and Professor Leigh Estabrook presented a “Salary Negotiation Workshop” full of advice for students as they contend with job offers. The archived recording is available at the following link (requires Windows Media Player or Real Media Player):
http://waterfall.lis.uiuc.edu/dl/classes/ala/alaapr01_08_2.ram

Inclusion in LIS Curriculum

Academic Libraries


Archives

Readings:


Summit, J. (Spring, 2003). Monuments and ruins: Spenser and the problem of the English library. ELH, 70(1), 1-34.
Exercise 1: Putting Yourself in the Archive

From the Ethnography of the University methods (http://www.eui.illinois.edu/methods_exercises_s14.html):

Write about an item or object that has meaning for you and that you would want to have archived—say, for example, at the U of I Student Life and Culture Archive. How would you want it classified, labeled, and stored?

Community Informatics

Readings:


**Information Organization**

**Readings:**


**Exercise 1: Cataloging Yourself**

Imagine that you have written a biography of your life and work and are now cataloging it.

- What subject headings would you use to describe the book? How many of these subject headings actually appear as authoritative headings under Resource Description and Access (RDA) guidelines? What are the limits of the authority headings?
- What keywords might you tag this book with in a user-generated catalog? What terms might other people use to search for your book?
- Ask a friend, family member or classmate to provide subject headings for your book. How are their suggestions similar or different than your own?
- Reflect on what it means to describe the “aboutness” of your biography, and of any work. How do your own subjectivities and positionality impact how you describe your biography?
Museums

Readings:


Exercise 1: Alternative Museums


Reflection:
• What is the mission of this museum?
• How does this museum challenge historical notions of what museums preserve?

Exercise 2: Couple in a Cage

Watch Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco’s “Couple in a Cage” performance art video: http://jag85.com/classes/lis502su11/COUPLE_IN_A_CAGE.m4v

Reflection:
• What is this video responding to?
• Describe the different reactions of people in the video to the couple in the cage. What is the framework that makes their reactions possible?
• How does the power of museums as institutions factor into the performance of this piece?
Pedagogy

Readings:


Public Libraries

Readings:


Research Epistemologies

Readings:


Technology Studies

Readings:


**Youth Services**

**Readings:**

**Diversity Resources**

**Being an Ally**

**Readings:**


**Online Resources:**

- The Do’s and Don’ts of Being a Good Ally
- Trans-Ally Tips

**Campus Resources:**

- Ally training through student affairs.

**Exercise 1: Leadership as an Ally**

What might leadership look like in the context of being an ally?

**Critical Race Theory**

**Readings:**


1241- 1299.


**Diversity and Multiculturalism in LIS**

**Readings:**


Online Resources:

- The LIS Access Midwest Program (LAMP) is a rich source of resources, funding opportunities, mentorship, and programs meant to encourage students from historically underrepresented groups to enter the field of LIS. Their Diversity Resources page includes:

  Associations of Ethnic Libraries

  - Joint Conference of Librarians of Color
  - American Indian Library Association (AILA)
  - Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA)
  - Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA)
  - Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA)
  - The National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking (REFORMA)

Resources on Encouraging Diversity in LIS

- Association of Research Libraries (ARL) Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce
- ARL Diversity Programs
- Synergy: News from ARL Diversity Programs
- ALA’s Diversity Counts
- Research on Campus Diversity by The Chronicle
- Education Libraries: Outreach to Minority Populations
- Leaders Wanted: Mentoring and Retaining Librarians of Color
- Bibliography of Diversity Resources (PDF)

(See the LAMP Diversity Resources website for more information and resources.)

- The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) has a list of Native American resources and sites for online research.

Exercise 1: Comparing Diversity Statements

Pick two or three diversity statements from professional associations (e.g. ALA), LIS institutions, or educational institutions (e.g. UIUC, GSLIS) and compare and contrast them.

- How is “diversity” being defined in these documents?
- What/who is featured?
- What/who is omitted?

Disability
Diversity, Inclusion, and Leadership Resources

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Readings:


Gender

Readings:


**LGBTQ**

**Readings:**


**Microaggressions**

**General Readings:**


Tynes, B. (2010, April 10). Colorblind racial ideology linked to racism, both online and offline. News Bureau Illinois. Available at: http://news.illinois.edu/news/10/0421online.html

Video:
Excedrin for Racial Tension Headache, Saturday Night Live http://www.hulu.com/watch/1605

Online Resources:
The Microaggressions Project: http://www.microaggressions.com/

Exercise 1: Reflecting on Microaggressions

For one week observe your own and other people’s verbal interactions and detect examples of microaggression. Be observant in both your work/school space as well as your personal space.

• Describe at least one example of a microaggression you observed/experienced from work/school and one from your personal life which you detected this week or remember from another time.
• What did you think and feel when you observed/experienced the microaggression?
• In what ways did your observation experiences this week affect your perception of the effects of discrimination, prejudice, and/or stereotypes on people.

Exercise 2: Institutionalized Aggressions: The Chief

Research the controversy surrounding the former University of Illinois, Urbana- Champaign mascot, “Chief Illiniwek.” How might the presence of the Chief as mascot, or as an unofficial mascot still worn on tee-shirts by students on campus, be understood in the framework of microaggressions?

Race and Racism

General Readings:


**Video:**

**Exercise 1: Racial Projects**
Read Omi and Winant’s chapter on racial projects.

- Discuss examples of macro and micro levels of racial projects in broader society. Which of these are racist racial projects and which are attempting to dissolve inequalities?
- Consider the world of LIS- what kinds of macro and micro racial projects can you articulate at the university, department, classroom, research, and job levels? Which of these are racist racial projects and which are attempting to dissolve inequalities?
- What is the value of naming racial projects? How can this knowledge be used to work towards racial inequality?

**Exercise 2: Racist Jokes**
In Jensen’s first chapter he discusses racist jokes, arguing that racist jokes are only possible in the context of systems of racial inequality such as white supremacy, in the same way the sexist jokes are only possible under patriarchy.

- Reflect on a time that someone has told a racist joke in your presence. What were the components of the joke? Who was the subject of it? What makes the joke “funny”?
- Why do you think the teller shared this joke with you? Who else was present? What made it “safe” for the teller to involve you in the joke? How did you feel during the telling of the joke? How did you respond?
- According to Jensen, what is the point of racist jokes? How does Jensen’s anecdote about his painful experience confronting his friend about the joke make you reflect on your own experience?
White Privilege and Whiteness

Readings:


Online Resources:

Southern Poverty Law Center, “Teaching Tolerance” site has classroom activities for K-12 and Professional Development Activities around issues of tolerance, cultural competency, and social justice: http://www.tolerance.org/

Exercise 1: Unpacking the Knapsack

Who are you and how does that shape your experience in the world? Read Peggy McIntosh’s article and “unpack” your knapsack of privilege.

- Follow through McIntosh’s checklists- reflect on your thoughts as you consider the different privileges she lists. Had you considered these privileges before this point?
- What other kinds of privilege do you have access to (gender, race, class, sexuality, age, ability)? Make your own checklists to help you unpack these privileges as well.
- What does it mean that privilege is invisible to those who have it? How does this function to protect privilege?
- How does privilege structure your values systems and views of the world? How might privilege inform your views about LIS as a field? About the kinds of questions you ask in the classroom? About policies you might support in a job? About areas of research you consider important?
Exercise 2: Two Stories of Success

In Jensen’s second chapter he tells the story of his life and success in two different versions (pages 22-23). Read these stories closely. One of his stories accounts for the benefits afforded to him through white privilege and the other does not.

Reflect on your own stories of how you became who you are today. Write two short versions of your life story in the same way Jensen did—one accounting for privilege and the other not. Jensen focuses on white privilege and if that is applicable to you focus on that, otherwise use other kinds of privilege to inform your story (gender, sexuality, class, ability, age, etc.) (300-500 words each) Consider the following reflection questions:

- How would the story change if you were focusing on another kind of privilege (race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, age)?
- How did it feel to tell your story in ways that account for privilege? Were certain versions easier than others to write or think about? If so, why do you think that is?

Leadership

Epistemologies

Readings:


Campus Resources:

The Illinois Leadership Center offers programs, resources, and training that support leadership training, including a certificate program.

Exercise 1: What is Leadership?

Brainstorm on board: What is “leadership”?
Reflection/discussion:
• What values or assumptions are implicit in these different concepts?
• Who is being led, by whom, and to where or what purpose?
• How might your positionality (in terms of race, gender, class, sexuality) influence how your assumptions or preferences about leadership practices?
• Reflect on the articles by Bernal, Rusch, and Warner (listed in the readings that support this module)- how do these different views of leadership map against the different epistemologies presented in their articles?
• How might we define or understand service in relation to leadership?
• How might we define or understand diversity or inclusion in relation to leadership?
• What would an ethics of leadership need to account for?
• Is “leadership” even a useful term? What would alternative terms be to better describe what we are talking about?