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### ***IS40540: The Reflective Professional***

#### **Description**

The purpose of this module is to offer professionals the opportunity to reflect on their work experiences, and learn from this reflection. This module is restricted to professionals with at least 5 years of work experience as an information and library professional and who are not currently enrolled as students in degree programmes at UCD SILS.

This 5-credit graduate level module is being offered in both the autumn 2010 and spring 2011 semesters.

Participants should apply to take this module as occasional students at UCD to participate in this course. An undergraduate degree or the equivalent is a pre-requisite for taking the module.

Information about how to apply can be found at:

<http://www.ucd.ie/sils/graduatestudents/occasionalstudents/> Applications for the autumn semester must be submitted by 21 September for the autumn semester, and 5 January for the spring semester.

#### **Learning outcomes**

A participant who successfully completes this module will be able to:

1. Critically discuss the roles and responsibilities of information and library professionals
2. Reflect on their professional work place experiences, and use that reflection to enhance their future work.

#### **Assignment Overview**

Students are required to submit a portfolio consisting of the following:

1. One-paragraph critiques of 3 articles. The articles will be provided to registered participants.
2. An up-to-date résumé and a short reflection on the résumé.
3. A reflective journal discussing a recent project or special activity. Details regarding the expected content of the journal will be provided.
4. Proof of completion of *one* of the following:
  - Completion of a total of 20 hours p.a. of continuing professional development (CPD) activities as defined by the Library Association Ireland. This includes<sup>1</sup>: post-qualification academic courses; attendance at courses, conferences, workshops; publications; professional association activities and/or professional reading in each of the past 3 years; or
  - Completion of 2 major work projects or special (non-routine) activities, i.e., projects or special activities of 2-3 months duration with approximately 50% or more of your time spent working on the projects, or the equivalent; or
  - Completion of 10 hours p.a. of continuing professional development activities for each of the past three years, and completion of 1 major work project or activity, i.e., a project of 2-3 months duration with approximately 50% or more of your time spent working on the project or the equivalent.

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<sup>1</sup> See <http://www2.libraryassociation.ie/about/education-committee/>

## **Course Meetings**

There will be a 2-hour, face-to-face and online meeting at the beginning of each semester. Participants can elect to attend either the face-to-face or online meeting. The face-to-face meeting for the autumn semester will be held at the School of Information and Library Studies, room 107, on Monday, September 27, 5:15pm-7:15pm. The online meeting will be held Monday, October 4, 4:30-6:30pm. While everyone is welcome to attend the face-to-face meeting, only registered participants will be able to attend the online meeting due to technology constraints. Participants should attend either the face-to-face or online meeting, but not both.

There will be a second optional meeting in November, date to be announced. This meeting will be held face-to-face and online. Participants should attend either the face-to-face or online meeting, but not both.

No other course sessions are planned; however, the course instructor will be available via email, phone or face-to-face for consultation as requested by participants.

## **Additional Information regarding Assignments**

### **Articles to be Read and Critiqued**

The purpose of the critiques is to verify that you have read and thought about each article.

Copies of the articles will be supplied to registered participants. The articles will discuss the value of reflection in and on professional practice, and will include an example of a reflection.

Each critique should highlight your impressions and perceptions of the ideas presented in the article. Examples of topics which may be included in a critique include:

- Questions that emerged as you read the article (e.g., your interpretation of the issues may differ from the author's interpretation);
- Suggestions for improving the ideas described in the article;
- Ideas about additional research in the same area;
- Relationships among this article and other articles you may have read.

Please note you are not required to discuss all the above topics in each critique. Rather, they are suggestions for things to think about and note as you read each article. A critique should *not* include a summary of the article. *Each critique should only be one paragraph in length.*

Following are two examples of critiques.

#### *Critique of Sample-Paper-1*

- Great ideas presented
- Difficult at times to see how ideas all hang together. I think a graphic or table synthesizing the ideas would be useful.
- Development of commemorative practices in late 19th C. may also be related to other concurrent developments in society such as the increase of social organizations (e.g., see the book, *Bowling Alone*) and changes in technology (e.g., camera and phone). Also what is the role of economics and politics in memory?
- P.7: I suspect social memory influences the individual and vice versa. Question: who is privileged to construct social memory?
- P. 9: The author mentions "the accelerating pace of time". What does this mean?

### *Critique of Sample-Paper-2*

- A definition of formation process in general is missing from this paper.
- Environmental/non-cultural processes also seem to influence what is formed/created in the first place, e.g., a geographic area that has lots of clay often leads to the development of pottery.
- The author seems to suggest formation processes have patterns, but chaos theory suggests there could be some randomness to a formation process as well.
- P. 10: Is creating a “fully representation sample” ever possible? Who judges this?
- Is the formation process a continuum that also includes creation and collection in use?  
Creation <-> collection in the field <-> collection in place/museum <-> collection in use

For the course held this autumn, the critiques will be due Monday, October 18, at 10:00am. The due date for the spring semester course will be announced later.

### **Résumé**

The purpose of this requirement is to help participants take stock of their professional achievements and accomplishments, and gain practice in presenting these to others in a professional format.

Résumé templates will be provided to registered participants.

You may use one of the résumé templates provided, augment a template provided, or use your own format. If you augment a provided template or use your own, be sure that all information asked for in the templates is included in your resume.

You must also reflect on your résumé. In the reflection, consider the following:

- What do you see as your strengths, and why?
- What are areas that perhaps are not strengths currently but could become your strengths in the future?
- Why are these new strengths important? How might you achieve this?

This reflection is not meant to be a formal report, but rather a collection of your reflective thoughts.

Résumés will not be evaluated based on your professional job title or achievements, as an employer might. Rather they will be assessed on how well information about your professional career is presented. That is, resumes will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Legibility
- Clarity
- Completeness of information
- Currentness of information
- Thoroughness of reflection and self-awareness

A detailed grading rubric that will be used to evaluate resumes will be shared with registered participants.

For the course held this autumn, this assignment will be due Wednesday, November 3, at 10:00am. The due date for the spring semester course will be announced later.

## **Reflective Journal**

The purpose of the journal is to give you the opportunity to reflect on a recent project or special activity and, ideally, learn from that experience in perhaps a new way and to gain skills in reflecting on work experience on an ongoing basis to assist your career development over time.

Your journal should focus on a recent work project or special activity (that is not a routine, day-to-day activity as discussed above). In your journal you should answer the following questions:

1. What were the goals of the project or activity when it began?
2. Did the goals change over time? Why or why not?
3. Who else was involved in the project or activity, and what were their responsibilities, at the onset?
4. Did the project team membership change over time? Why or why not?
5. Did team members' roles and responsibilities change over time? Why or why not?
6. What two things did you enjoy most about the project or activity, and why?
7. What two things were most challenging for you during the project or activity, and why?
8. How did you initially approach each challenge?
9. Did your approach change over time? Why or why not?
10. What did you learn in general and about yourself from these challenges and the things you enjoyed about the project or activity?
11. Will what you learned impact your future professional work? Please explain.

The journal is not meant to be a formal report, but rather a collection of your reflective thoughts. There is no set format or form for your journal; however, there should be a journal entry for each question above. Your journal can be submitted in a digital format, consisting of text, graphics, audio and/or video, or it can be submitted on paper and include text, pictures, etc. Make the journal your own, be honest, and let your words and thoughts flow. Dig deeply to reflect on your experiences and learn from them. When creating your journal you do not have to answer the questions in the order given above. It can be beneficial to start with the question you find easiest to answer, then the next easiest, etc. If when answering a question you discover you'd like to revise a previous answer, go right ahead and do so. You can append your new answer to the previous answer to demonstrate a willingness to revise your thinking.

Please do not provide the full names of your colleagues in your journal. The journal is not about reporting on or judging others. It's a tool to help you to learn from your experiences.

Journals will be assessed on the following criteria:

- Legibility
- Clarity
- Thoroughness of reflection and self-awareness
- Evidence of critical thinking

Examples of journal entries and a detailed grading rubric that will be used to evaluate journals will be shared with registered participants.

For the course held this autumn, the journal will be due Friday, December 3, at 3:30pm. The due date for the spring semester course will be announced later.

## CPD and Project Requirements

This requirement aims to ensure participants have sufficiently acquired prior professional learning in formal and/or informal learning environments.

Qualifying CPD courses and workshops include those offered by professional organizations, consultants, and private companies. SILS is not planning to offer CPD courses in conjunction with this course; however, if you have previously completed a course at SILS as an occasional student, that course can be used to satisfy the CPD requirement.

Examples of projects and special activities include: designing and implementing a new programme, e.g., a summer reading programme for teens, in a library, designing and creating a new online tutorial, creating new promotional materials for your organization, implementing a teacher-school librarian collaboration process, and evaluating or deploying a new information system in your organization.

Proof of completion can consist of a completion certificate from a course or workshop, a letter attesting to student's completion of a course by the course instructor, a letter from your manager attesting to your participation in a project, a copy of a project report or presentation with you as an author or co-author.

If you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of CPD or projects/activities please contact the school for clarification.

For the course held this autumn, this assignment will be due Friday, December 3, at 3:30pm. The due date for the spring semester course will be announced later.

## Grading

The assignments will carry the following weight towards your final grade.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>% of Final Grade</i>	<i>Due Date in Autumn Semester</i>
Critiques	20%	18 Oct, 10:00am
Resume	20%	3 Nov, 10:00am
Journal	45%	3 Dec, 3:30pm
Documentation of completed CPD activities and/or projects	15%	3 Dec, 3:30pm

## Instructor

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