

Course Syllabus for LIS 7403

Site: [Welcome to LSU Moodle!](#)
Course: 2021 Summer LIS (B) 7403 for Tao Jin
Book: Course Syllabus for LIS 7403

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Description



This is the official syllabus for this course. Read it carefully! Click on any of the chapters to jump to the section you want to read.

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Diversity Statement

Welcome to the Course!

This course is designed to introduce major types of special libraries; their purpose and function in businesses, governmental agencies and other organizations; principles of administration; technical processing; reference services' special methods, routines and records.

This course focuses on characteristics of contemporary special libraries, particularly on their history, diversity, and dependency on their parent organizations, as well as the impacts of these features on the trend of information professionals. Specifically, we will examine this type of information agencies using the following lenses:

- Definition and nature
- Competencies of information professionals
- Users and services
- Collections and facilities
- Demonstrating value as a key to survival

Assistance and Communication

Requests for support should be directed to the appropriate resources depending on the nature of the support requested. Please review the options below when requesting support for your course.

1. Content and assignment questions. If you have questions about course content or about the course in general, please directly email me at taojin@lsu.edu or interact with me during the office hour to seek for help. I will respond as quickly as I can.
2. Personal progress questions. If you have questions regarding your course progress, grades, or other issues of a personal nature, you should send me an email.
3. Technical questions or issues. If you have any technical problems or questions, email the ITS Help Desk at servicedesk@lsu.edu or call them at (225) 578-3375. Be sure to include your name, course number, and section in your contact.

Course Outcomes and Module Learning Objectives

This course covers the following specific measurable outcomes and learning objectives. All assessments are aligned to these outcomes and objectives.

Course Outcomes (CO)

When you complete this course, you will be able to:

1. Recognize key concepts associated with special libraries and the changing nature of information professions;
2. Identify major types of special libraries;
3. Explain the organizational context and structural characteristics of special libraries;
4. Illustrate competencies of information professionals;
5. Distinguish different types of special libraries in terms of their user groups, services provided, collections to build and maintain, and facilities.

Module Topics and Learning Objectives

The following is a breakdown of module topics and their associated learning objectives.

Module 1: Nature of Special Libraries and Information Centers

1. Define the concept of special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO3)
2. Distinguish key stages of the development of special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO4)
3. List special features for special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5)

Module 2: Competencies of Information Professionals

1. Define the concept of information professionals (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4)
2. Explain major changes among the three competency list developed by SLA (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4)
3. Summarize alternative career options for an information professional (CO1, CO3, CO4)

Module 3: Users and Services

1. List different user groups of a given type of special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO5)
2. Outline major information services provided by special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5)
3. Relate the users and services to the competencies and salary of information professionals (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5)

Module 4: Collections and Facilities

1. Identify major characters of a special library's collection (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO5)
2. Recognize different facility needs at different types of special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO5)
3. Review the trend of removing the L-word in the field of special libraries (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5)

Module 5: Demonstrate Value

1. Describe the value of special libraries and information professionals (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5)
2. Outline major approaches to evaluating a special library (CO1, CO3, CO4, CO5)
3. Relate the value issue with competencies of information professionals through a lens of training (CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5)

Reading Materials

This course does not have any required textbooks. Instead, I have a list of readings below for your information. Use the tool bar at the top of the PDF to navigate through the document or to search, print, or download.

Technical Information

Moodle runs on Windows, Linux, iOS, Android, or any device with a web browser. For information on browsers, please visit the LSU [ITS Web Browser Recommendation](#) page.

Google Chrome and Firefox are the recommended browsers for Moodle at LSU. We also recommend that you have Adobe Flash installed and enabled, and that Javascript is enabled.

Printing Your Course Material

Use one of the following methods to print module content:

- See [printing options using Firefox](#)
- Use the print commands in Moodle to print full books.
- Embedded PDFs contain printing functionality.
- Select Ctrl + P from your computer's keyboard.
- If you have added a print icon shortcut on your browser's toolbar, click the icon to print content.

Grading Scale and Expected Time Commitment for the Course Work

Your grade in this course will be determined by the specific activities and assessments described in this syllabus. In the following subchapters you will find details about each type of activity and assessment, as well as the grade breakdown and grading scale. Specific expectations for each graded item are included within these subchapters. Make sure you read all of the instructions! Please note that all due dates and times are in **Central Daylight Time (CDT)**.

Remember that the course covers an entire semester of work or the equivalent of a classroom course lasting fifteen weeks. In terms of credit hours, this course is designed to deliver the same amount of material as an equivalent 3-credit brick-and-mortar class. For each credit hour, you should expect to put in two to three hours of outside work per week.

That being said, this summer course is relatively intensive, because we are required to complete the regular 15-week work within **5 weeks (Summer Term 2021 - First Summer [Session B]: May 24 - June 26)**. It means that each module here contains approximately 3 weeks of course work in a regular semester and the same time and effort on your part. In other words, if you take the course in a regular semester (Fall or Spring) and you spend about 6 to 9 hours per week; then you will need to spend 18 to 27 hours per week to complete the course during the summer term.

Grade Breakdown and Grading Scale

There are three components to your course grade. The grade breaks down as follows:

- Class Discussion Forums (five in total)
- Research Paper (one in total)
- Site Visit Project (one in total)

Total = scores weighted by the following predetermined percentages.

Grade Breakdown

Item	Weight
Five Class Discussion Forums (10% for each)	50%
One Research Paper	20%
One Site Visit Project	30%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

The following grading scale applies:

Numeric Bracket	Grade
98%–100%	A+
93%–97.99%	A
90%–92.99%	A-
87%–89.99%	B+
83%–86.99%	B
80%–82.99%	B-
77%–79.99%	C+
73%–76.99%	C
70%–72.99%	C-
67%–69.99%	D+
63%–66.99%	D
60%–62.99%	D-
0%–59.99%	F

Class Discussion Forums

I will design and post a series of class discussion forums, which help you explore some hot topics related to the learning materials and deepen your understanding. Therefore, you should finish your assigned readings prior to engaging in these forums.

The class discussion forums are a highly interactive component of this course. You will have chances to make any comments about the instructor's postings, and fellow classmates' ideas and work. Disagreement and challenge can be useful, but I hope that if a controversy arises, all parties involved should proceed nicely. To maintain a healthy and professional discussion atmosphere, everybody is expected to keep the conversations civil, constructive and respectful of all class members at all times.

In many, if not most cases, a good discussion post will address the discussion prompts fully, draw on relevant literature, and incorporate personal reflections, experiences and constructive suggestions if applicable. Such a post would be like an essay with at least 450 words. Short comments, such as "this looks great", "I agree", or "me too", do not count as a fully fleshed out post/response. If within one post the 450 words requirement cannot be fulfilled, the student can make multiple responses to meet the minimum. If a forum assignment is to ask for a diagram, the word-count and citation requirements will not be applicable. The evaluation will be based on the use of symbols and conventions, as well as the overall quality of the presentation.

A student is not required to respond to other students' post(s). The discussion grading will primarily be based on the student's original post(s). But responses to other students' posts are encouraged and will be seen as positive contribution to this class activity, which may possibly deserve bonus points awarded to the final grade of the course.

Usually the class discussion forum will be due before midnight on Sunday evenings. You will have almost an entire week to finish it.

Overall, I am more interested in the quality than the quantity of your postings. When I assess your performance on a class discussion forum, I will use the following grading rubric unless otherwise specified:

	Excellent: Exceptional Achievement	Good: Extensive Achievement	Satisfactory: Acceptable Achievement	Poor: Minimal Achievement	Not Acceptable: Inadequate Achievement
1. Number of Words: What the student contributes fulfills the word-count requirement set in the syllabus (>=450 words)	What the student contributes is significantly beyond the minimum requirement and also keeps a concise manner.	What the student contributes is significantly beyond the minimum requirement.	What the student contributes is above the minimum requirement.	What the student contributes just fulfills the minimum requirement.	What the student contributes is below the minimum requirement.
2. Completeness: Have all the required elements in the original discussion prompt been addressed?	All of the required elements in the original discussion prompt are fully and efficiently addressed in a balanced way.	All of the required elements in the original discussion prompt are fully addressed in a balanced way.	All of the required elements in the original discussion prompt are adequately addressed.	All of the required elements in the original discussion prompt are superficially addressed.	Not all of the required elements in the original discussion prompt are addressed.
3. Comprehension about topics: The student's posts are demonstrative of her or his comprehension about the topic(s) under discussion.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has comprehensively understood the topic(s) under discussion, and provided relevant insights.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has comprehensively understood the topic(s) under discussion.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has adequately understood the topic(s) under discussion.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has superficially understood the topic(s) under discussion.	The student's posts do not reflect that she or he has understood the topic(s) under discussion.

	Excellent: Exceptional Achievement	Good: Extensive Achievement	Satisfactory: Acceptable Achievement	Poor: Minimal Achievement	Not Acceptable: Inadequate Achievement
4. Critical thinking: The student's posts are demonstrative of her or his critical thinking ability.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has done a sufficient, objective, and balanced analysis and/or evaluation on the question(s) in the original discussion prompt.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has done a meaningful analysis and/or evaluation on the question(s) in the original discussion prompt.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has done an adequate analysis and/or evaluation on the question(s) in the original discussion prompt.	The student's posts reflect that she or he has done a minimal but superficial analysis and/or evaluation on the question(s) in the original discussion prompt.	The student's posts do not reflect that she or he has done any analysis and/or evaluation on the question(s) in the original discussion prompt.
5. Quality of writing: Do the student's posts have minimal number of grammatical errors, a well-organized structure, and coherent flows of ideas?	The student's posts have no grammatical errors spotted, are well structured, and with cohesive and coherent flows of ideas.	The student's posts have minimal grammatical errors spotted, are well structured, and with cohesive and coherent flows of ideas.	The student's posts have a number of grammatical errors spotted, are with an acceptable structure and flows of ideas.	The student's posts have quite a few grammatical errors spotted, and are with a loosely designed structure and flows of ideas.	The student's post(s) have numerous grammatical errors, an obvious structural problem, and badly presented flows of ideas.

Research Paper

Students will work individually to write up a research paper on a self-selected topic. However, the topic must be about either an **ENDURING** or an **EMERIGING** issue that you consider essential in the field of special libraries.

An academic research paper usually develops a new, unique, or novel argument. To support the argument, the research paper must contain a literature review, which provides a solid background and foundation for the investigation. Quite frequently, a literature review is written as an independent, complete paper in itself.

To finish this assignment successfully, you should first identify an issue that you think an enduring or an emerging one in the field of special libraries. Often times, the topic takes a form of question. For example, "how should we market the value of a special library?" "Why should information professionals (IPs) be highly ICT literate in health sciences and medical libraries or information centers?" "What are long term effects on the lack of support in a corporate information agency?" Such central research questions will give you clear directions on your research, help you define the issue, and produce meaningful takeaways.

After a topic is decided, you are expected to search for relevant scholarly literature about the topic. You should carefully document how you arrive at the literature items (i.e., book chapters, journal articles, academic conference papers, magazine articles, etc.) to be reviewed and have at least one paragraph in your paper to report the searching and identification process (e.g., which databases were used; which period of time did you target on; what search strategies did you use to retrieve the literature items; and what criteria did you utilize to do the selection?).

Upon determining the finalized set of literature items, you will begin reading through and making sense of them. Next, you summarize and synthesize the arguments and ideas of these works into different themes or facets about the topic. This combing and braiding course is also an exploring and probing process - some unique or novel insights may emerge to be contributed to the knowledge body of the field. Here is an [example literature-review-based research paper](#) that I published with a visiting scholar years ago (Jin, T., & Chen, M. 2019. Exploring Underlying Causes of Cross-national Differences in Intellectual Property Ethics: A Concept Map. In E. Tomé, F. Cesário, & R.R. Soares, *Proceedings of the 20th European Conference on Knowledge Management*, pp. 584-592. Reading, UK: Academic Conferences and Publishing International Limited). More sample literature review articles can be found in the [Annual Review of Information Science and Technology](#), which is an authoritative but discontinued periodical in information science and technology.

The assignment should have a title, and you can title it as whatever you wish.

In this work you are expected to review a minimum of 10 different scholarly literature items.

The length of the main body of the paper (excluding title page, abstract, table of contents, figures and tables, bibliography, and appendices, if applicable) should be 8 to 10 pages, 1.5 spaced, 12 font size, with a 1-inch margin on all sides.

The paper must be sourced and cited properly. When citing sources in text and in the reference list, the APA citation format is preferred.

While evaluating your work, I'm going to use the following criteria:

Criteria	Evaluation
Topic selected	
Relevance of the topic: Is it an enduring or emerging issue in the field of special libraries?	
Sufficiency of the literature items identified and reviewed (n>=10)	
Relevancy of the literature items identified and reviewed	

Depth of thinking	
Critical thinking: To what extent has this work demonstrated the student's critical thinking ability?	
Research question: Is a central research question developed to guide this review?	
Synthesis: Are there any themes or sub-themes identified and synthesized?	
Insights provided: Has the work generated any insights or takeaways? (Or, has the work addressed the "so what" question?)	
Quality of synthesis and writing	
Minimum of grammatical and typographical errors: To what extent does this work have incorrect spellings, grammatical and punctuation errors?	
Flow of ideas: To what extent are the flows of ideas presented in a cohesive and coherent way?	
Structure/organization: To what extent is this work well organized/structured?	
Citation, format, and stylistic issues: To what extent are there any citation, format, and stylistic issues?	
Completeness and clarity of the presentation: To what extent is this work presented in a complete and clear manner?	
Total Score	/20

Due time: June 15, 2021 (Tuesday), 23:59 (Central Time).

Site Visit Project

To visit different special libraries and/or information centers in real life was traditionally an integral part of this course. When the course was offered in a traditional classroom setting, the instructor took the entire class and spent half of the semester in visiting five to six special libraries located in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. This was actually also the largest fun part of this course, because we reached out, made tours, and closely watched how different special libraries and/or information centers run in reality.

When the course was moved to online, the site visit activity started to face huge challenges, because students would be geographically distributed and no synchronous meetings could be organized, either. However, the instructor decided to keep this vital and vigorous part of the course. Correspondingly, he modified the old strategy of conducting such site visits collectively. Instead, he transformed it into an assignment, prompting students to select and visit a site by themselves either individually or by group, and then sharing what they find with the rest of the class online. It has been working very well.

Below are the procedures.

First, students will be given a list of potential sites available for them to visit.

Second, the student(s) decide which site to visit. A sign-up sheet will be posted on the course website. For the site selection, a rule of first come, first serve will be followed. If none of the pre-determined sites on the list is reachable to the student(s), they will be prompted to propose a site by themselves. The instructor will consider the suggestion and approve or disapprove it. If it is disapproved, the instructor will be responsible for looking for an alternative site. Some ideas about candidate sites will be located in the American Library Directory or in the Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers, or the directory of special libraries located on the State Library of Louisiana's website. To avoid bias, the site selected should not be the one where the student currently works or has worked in the past. In order to make sure the project smoothly proceeds, the student is required to complete the selection no later than *June 9, 2021*.

Third, after the research site is determined and approved, the student(s) will go ahead to contact the site and make an appointment with the liaison there for a visit. The instructor would encourage students to contact and communicate with the selected site early, because some special libraries may need an approval procedure to receive visitors. The special librarian or information specialist working in that special library or information center may also request to see a visiting plan or interview protocol ahead of time, so that they will have opportunities to prepare.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some special libraries or information centers may not be fully reopened yet to receive visitors. In that case, the student(s) can explore a possibility to visit the site virtually and conduct an interview with the head special librarian or information specialist through any video conferencing systems, such as Zoom.

Fourth, once a visit (or virtual visit) date is scheduled and the preparation work on both sides (i.e., the visitor, and the visited) are done, the student should be ready to proceed the visit. The purpose of this Site Visit Project is in two-fold: (1) to gain an understanding of the basic operation of the visited special library or information center; and (2) to identify and discuss about any problematic areas that the visited special library or information center may have/face and how they are (or can be) addressed.

During the visit, again, the student(s) will be expected to interview the head special librarian or information manager who leads the administration of the special library or information center. Ideally, the visit will allow the student(s) to see the general and specific working environments (a tour will be great, but probably not every

organization can arrange this to visitors). If the student(s) want to take photos, record any audio and/or video related to this visit, before proceeding they must obtain the host special library or information center's consent or approval.

When the student(s) conduct the interview, they should focus on exploring the following aspects of the special library or information center:

- Users
- Services/products offered
- Staffing and structure
- Position in its parent organization's organizational chart
- General organizational culture toward the library and the information services provided
- Collections
- Facilities
- Approximate budget (if available)
- Marketing/PR methods
- Any problems or difficulties the special library or information center is experiencing/facing
- How the special librarian(s) address these problems/difficulties

The above list is also a source for the student(s) to develop their interview questions. The site visit is hopefully done before *June 18, 2021*.

Fifth, after the visit, the student(s) should remember to send their host/hostess a ThankYou message/note. Then, the next step would be to compile what have been collected during the visit, transcribe the recorded interview if applicable, and prepare a 15-minute or so presentation for the class. The presentation is hopefully voiced over with narrations, and uploaded to a specific forum established by the instructor. On this forum, fellow students and the instructor will be able to watch the presentations and ask questions. Students can use any tools (e.g., Microsoft PowerPoint, YouTube, Prezi, etc.) to produce this presentation. The presentations should be uploaded and shared with the entire class by *June 23, 2021*.

Sixth and lastly, a final report of the Site Visit Project will be due on *June 26, 23: 59 (CDT)*. The length of the main body of the report (excluding title page, abstract, table of contents, figures and tables, bibliography, and appendices, if applicable) should be minimally 10 pages and maximally 12 pages, 1.5 spaced, 12 font size, with a 1-inch margin on all sides. The paper must be sourced and cited properly. When citing sources, the APA citation format is preferred.

If this site visit involves any audio/video recording, a written consent must be obtained. A sample written consent form will be posted on the course website.

You do not need to include the signed consent form in your final report. Instead, you can keep it to your own records.

I do not require any references for this submission. If you would like to include some, feel free to use a standard citation style that you are comfortable with.

If you do this site visit project in group, please fill a peer evaluation form and submit it individually.

While evaluating your work, I will use the following criteria.

Grading Table

Assignment Criteria	Maximum Point
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Completeness of the report (the extent to which the required components [i.e., those bullet points listed under Step 4 or those questions listed in the interview protocol] are addressed accurately and completely)	5
Quality of writing (the extent to which you use simple and precise language, organize your report in a logical and coherent manner, and employ correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar).	10
Critical thinking abilities (the extent to which you demonstrate your thinking competencies, e.g., skills of interpretation, association, inference, evaluation, problem identification and analysis)	10
Site visit presentation (the extent to which you make a complete, effective, and clear presentation)	5
Total	30

Course Policies

The following policies apply throughout your enrollment in this course. For specific questions about these policies, please contact either me or the appropriate office listed in the subchapters.

Engagement and Participation

Please check into your Moodle course frequently to keep track of your work. Your active engagement in discussion forums or other required class activities plays an important role in succeeding in this course.

Timely communication is an e-learning best practice. Check your LSU email and the News and Announcements Forum on the course front page daily to make sure you do not miss any communications from your instructor or classmates. Contact the instructor in advance if you are going to miss an assignment or turn in work late. This will give the instructor sufficient time to allow for discussing an alternative schedule.

Incomplete Work and/or Zero Grades

Written assignments are due by the due dates announced each week. Assignments are turned in online and are due at midnight of the due date. In general, late assignments should always be avoided.

If you encounter a situation and foresee that you may not be able to submit the assignment on time, you should contact me as early as possible. I will assess the situation and see how I can help. I will accommodate those students with valid reasons in such a way that they retain an equal opportunity for success in class and are not penalized for having a late submission. The student is responsible for providing reasonable advance notification and appropriate documentation of the reason for the late submission. For those students who have valid reasons, I will consider alternative options for them, including granting a reasonable extension of the assignment deadline.

If I am not notified in advance, the work submitted late without an excuse acceptable will be downgraded, and a late submission deduction of one (1) point per day will be assessed up to two (2) calendar days. [Note: The total numerical grade of this course is 100 points.] Work submitted late without an acceptable excuse after two calendar days will be graded as a permanent zero for that assignment. Late submission of the Site Visit Project will not be accepted.

Academic Integrity

Academic Misconduct

Students in LSU Online courses must comply with the LSU Code of Student Conduct. *Academic misconduct* includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and/or any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student. Preventing academic misconduct requires learners to take ownership of their individual work for individual assignments and assessments. Learners who violate the LSU Code of Student Conduct will be referred to Student Advocacy & Accountability. For undergraduate students, a first academic violation could result in a zero grade on the assignment or failing the class and disciplinary probation until graduation. For a second academic violation, the result could be suspension from LSU. For graduate students, suspension is the appropriate outcome for the first offense.

To read more, please visit the [LSU Code of Student Conduct page](#).

Plagiarism and Citation Method

It is your responsibility to refrain from plagiarizing the academic property of another and to utilize appropriate citation method for all coursework. Ignorance of the citation method is not an excuse for academic misconduct. Remember, there is a difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to properly cite each respectively.

One tool available to assist you in correct citations is the “References” function in Microsoft Word. This program automatically formats the information you input according to the citation method you select for the document. This program also has the ability to generate a reference or works cited page for your document. The version of Microsoft Word with the “References” function is available in most University computer labs. A demonstration of how to use this tool is available online at the [LSU Student Advocacy & Accountability page](#).

Unauthorized Assistance

All work must be completed without assistance unless explicit permission for group or partner work is given by the faculty member. This is critical so that the professor can assess your performance on each assignment. Read the syllabus and assignment directions carefully. When in doubt, e-mail your instructors or ask in a discussion forum. Seeking clarification is your responsibility as a student. Assuming group or partner work is okay without permission constitutes a violation of the LSU Code of Student Conduct.

Accessibility

A learner with a disability is entitled by law to equal access to university programs. Two federal laws protect persons with disabilities in post-secondary education: the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Pub. L. No. 93-112, as amended), the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (Pub. L. No. 101-336) and the ADA Amendments Act (Pub. L. No.110-325). LSU A&M is committed to ensuring that its websites, online courses, and all online materials are accessible to people with disabilities.

If you have accessibility needs that we can help with, visit the [LSU Disability Services page](#) and register for accommodations before you begin your course work.

If you notice that your course contains material that is not accessible, please contact your instructor directly to discuss accommodations.

Netiquette

Communication in the online classroom comes across differently than the communication we are accustomed to through academic writing and face-to-face classroom discussion. Use online etiquette guidelines like the ones listed in the document below to craft your communication.

You can also read [The Core Rules of Netiquette](#) by Virginia Shea (1994) to understand the human aspect of online communication.

☰ Online Etiquette Guide.pdf

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— 100% +



Diversity Statement

Diversity is fundamental to LSU's mission and the University is committed to creating and maintaining a living and learning environment that embraces individual difference. Cultural inclusion is of highest priority. LSU recognizes that achieving national prominence depends on the human spirit, participation, and dedicated work of the entire university community. Through its Commitment to Community, LSU strives to create an inclusive, respectful, intellectually challenging climate that embraces individual difference in race, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, age, spirituality, socioeconomic status, disability, family status, experiences, opinions, and ideas. LSU proactively cultivates and sustains a campus environment that values open dialogue, cooperation, shared responsibility, mutual respect, and cultural competence—the driving forces that enrich and enhance cutting-edge research, first-rate teaching, and engaging community outreach activities.