

*Reading Guide for the Reading Course:*

# **The Serious Leisure Perspective**

Dr. Jenna Hartel | Faculty of Information | Winter 2013

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION (FROM THE FACULTY OF INFORMATION'S ACADEMIC REGULATIONS)**

Reading courses serve as a way to meet the needs of individual students who wish to explore topics not covered by courses currently offered at the iSchool. They are categorized as elective courses, and are subject to the same regulations as other elective courses. Reading Courses require that student and instructor meet regularly and frequently; therefore, both must be available for meetings on campus. The written work of a Reading Course is comparable to that of other elective courses.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

In this reading course on the Serious Leisure Perspective (SLP), a theoretical framework of leisure, students will develop:

- Understanding of the SLP including its: intellectual history; strengths and weaknesses as a theoretical framework; application as a classification system; and main types (casual leisure, serious pursuits, project-based leisure) and sub-types.
- Familiarity with social scientific concepts related to the SLP (social world, lifestyle, flow, and recreation specialization).
- Expertise in one specialized leisure activity and/or population (varies per student) within the SLP and an ability to approach it as a research object.
- Knowledge of the positive turn in the social sciences and its implications for scholarship.
- Awareness of research and collaboration at the intersection of the fields of leisure studies and information studies.
- Cognizance of the emerging literature in information studies about leisure.
- Enhanced skill in academic practice and increased confidence as a junior scholar.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

As a reading course the primary activity is independent student reading and reflection, guided by the instructor. The course is supplemented with learning exercises; bimonthly meetings of a peer discussion group; a visit by the architect of the SLP, Robert A. Stebbins; online searching and literature reviews; and a bibliographical final assignment. The schedule for the semester loosely follows the intellectual history of the SLP. Assigned readings favor original publications by Stebbins; later synthesis and alternative perspectives are provided for contrast.

## **PREREQUISITES & REQUIREMENTS**

This is an advanced graduate seminar and suits students who have already established interest in and knowledge of leisure-related information practice. It requires an ability to engage literature independently and to discuss ideas in a small group environment.

## EVALUATION

The course will be evaluated based upon successful completion of the assignments, summarized in the following table. Feedback on performance will be provided verbally by the instructor throughout the semester. This reading course and its assignments are graded as *satisfactory* (A) or *unsatisfactory* (B).

Assignment	Value	Requirements	Due
Reading	40%	Several hours of independent reading per week of materials assigned in the <i>Reading Guide</i> . Additional independent literature searching and reading of scholarly publications about a specialized leisure activity and/or population (varies per student).	Throughout
Participation	20%	Attending the bimonthly discussion group; leading one discussion session; coordinating and participating in the visit of Dr. Robert A Stebbins (February 10-14, 2013).	Throughout
Bibliographical Paper	40%	Developing an annotated <i>rigorous systematic bibliography</i> (Bates, 1992) or <i>bibliographic essay</i> (White, 1992) about your specialized population. The paper will include at least 25 new items (not already in the syllabus). The bibliographical paper should demonstrate your fluency in the literature surrounding your specialized population.	Friday, April 5, 2013 (last day of the semester) at 5:00 p.m.

## COURSE WEBSITE ON BLACKBOARD

A course website will be maintained on Blackboard at <http://portal.utoronto.ca>. The website will take shape organically over the course of the semester to meet student's learning needs. Technical questions about Blackboard can be emailed to [portal.help@utoronto.ca](mailto:portal.help@utoronto.ca).

## SPECIAL EVENT AND COLLOQUIUM

The architect of the SLP, Robert A. Stebbins, will visit the Faculty of Information, February 10-14, 2013. This is a fantastic opportunity to learn about the SLP from its founder, a renown social scientist. Students of the reading course will help to organize and host his visit, which includes a public colloquium, social events, and a meeting with the discussion group. Dr. Stebbins will join our discussion group on Monday, February 11; his colloquium talk (abstract, below) is a required event for those in the reading course.

*"Leisure, Information, and Self-Directed Learning" by Robert A. Stebbins, FRSC*

*The three forms of leisure comprising the serious leisure perspective (SLP) --- serious, casual, and project-based leisure --- are presented. Their differential relationship to information is then explored. Next, self-directed learning (SDL) is introduced as a type of information behavior and a critical intervening process by which leisure and information are linked in the pursuit of free-time activities. The object of this paper is twofold: to examine the nature of the information acquired in pursuing leisure activities and to examine the ways this is done.*

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Our reading course is organized around six blocks that last two weeks each. This *Reading Guide* defines four blocks (Block 1, 2, 3, 4); the final two blocks (Block 5, 6) will be customized to the interests that emerge earlier in the course. Each block has two dimensions: a general level and a personal agenda. The general level (☁) is essential for all students and introduces fundamental concepts of the SLP and issues at the intersection of leisure studies and information studies. The general level is guided by the instructor; embodied in the assigned readings; and covered in the discussion group. The individual level (☘) entails the various narrower interests of each participant in the course. Specific foci take the form of a leisure activity and/or population. This level is pursued independently via literature searching, reading, reflection, a bibliographical paper, and one-on-one exchanges with the instructor.

## Block 1: The "Positive Turn;" Origins of the SLP; "The Project;" Amateurs; Concatenated Exploration

### General Level

Discussion Group: January 12, 3:00-5:00; Discussion host is Prof. Hartel.

Seligman, M. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An Introduction. *American Psychologist* 55(1), 5–14.

Seligman, M. (2004). The new era of positive psychology. TED2004.

Stebbins, R.A. (2013). Research and theory on positiveness in the social sciences - The central role of leisure. In T. Freire (Ed.), *Positive leisure science: From subjective experience to social contexts* (pp. 3-20). Philadelphia, PA: Springer.

Stebbins, R.A. (2010). Positive sociology. In G. Ritzer (Ed.), *The Blackwell encyclopedia of sociology online*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *Serious Leisure: A Perspective for our time*. London: Transaction. [Read "The History of the Perspective," 101-118]

Stebbins, R. A. (1982). Serious leisure: A conceptual statement. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 25, 251-272.

Stebbins, R. A. (1979). *Amateurs: On the margin between work and leisure*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Stebbins, R. A. (2006). Concatenated exploration: Aiding theoretic memory by planning well for the future. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 35, 483-494.

Shen, X. S., & Yarnal, C. (2010). Blowing open the serious leisure-casual leisure dichotomy: What's in there? *Leisure Sciences*, 32, 162-179.

### Personal Agenda

Select a leisure activity and/or population as your specific topic; at this point you do not have to use the terminology of the SLP. Implement a system to save bibliographic references related to your specific topic and this reading course. Create a list of the search terms, subject headings, and descriptors associated with your specific topic; be prepared to share these during the discussion group. Seek academic reference materials on your topic from encyclopedias, dictionaries, fact books, and handbooks. Locate academic books on your topic from the University of Toronto catalogue and *WorldCat*. Identify scholars or experts on your topic and correspond with them if appropriate. Make an appointment with the instructor to discuss your topic and research progress thus far. Read, organize, and reflect on all of the above; these tasks will continue over the duration of the semester.

## Block 2: Elaboration of the SLP

### General Level

Discussion Group: January 28, 3:00-5:00; Discussion host is Brian.

- Stebbins, R. A. (2007). *Serious Leisure: A Perspective for our time*. London: Transaction. [Read "Recent Research on Serious Leisure," 25-36; "Synthesizing the Forms," 53-76; "Extending the Perspective," 77-100]
- Stebbins, R. A. (1997). Casual leisure: A conceptual statement. *Leisure Studies*, 16(1), 17-25.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1998). *After Work: The Search for an optimal leisure lifestyle*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises. [Read "The Hobbies: Serious Leisure for All," 49-68]
- Stebbins, R. A. (1996). *The barbershop singer: Inside the social world of a musical hobby*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Baldwin, C. K., & Norris, P. A. (1999). Exploring the dimensions of serious leisure: Love me -- love my dog. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 31, 1-17.
- Stebbins, R. A. (1996). *Volunteering: A serious leisure perspective*. *Non-profit and Voluntary Action Quarterly*, 25, 211-224.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2001). *New directions in the theory and research of serious leisure*. New York: Edwin Mellen Press. [Read "The Liberal Arts Hobbies," 27-40]
- Stebbins, R. A. (2005). Project-based leisure: Theoretical neglect of a common use of free time. *Leisure Studies*, 24, 1-11.
- Stebbins, R. A. (2004). *Between work and leisure: The common ground of two separate worlds*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction. [Read "Occupational Devotion and Occupational Devotees," 1-20]

### Personal Agenda

Go to the Bibliography at the SLP website and determine where your specific topic fits in the categories; retrieve and read any items relevant to your topic. Locate popular books on your topic from *WorldCat* and/or the TPL; retrieve any that seem valuable. Via UTOR e-resources, go to the journal *Leisure Studies* and *Leisure Sciences*; browse the TOCs for the past 10 years; look for material of relevance to your topic. Read, organize, and reflect on all of the above; these tasks will continue over the duration of the semester. Make an appointment with the instructor to discuss your topic and research progress thus far (optional).

### **Block 3: Special Event with Robert A. Stebbins**

Discussion Group: February 11, 3:00-5:00; Robert A. Stebbins is our special guest!

Focus on your own research; no assigned readings. Come to our gathering prepared to discuss one topic/question with Dr. Stebbins. Also, attend the colloquium on February 12; take Dr. Stebbins to lunch on February 13.

## Block 4: Imported Concepts: Social World, Lifestyle, Flow, & Recreation Specialization

Discussion Group: February 25, 3:00-5:00; Discussion host is John.

Unruh, D. (1979). Characteristics and types of participation in social worlds. *Symbolic Interaction*, 2, 115-129.

Unruh, D. (1980). The nature of social worlds. *Pacific Sociological Review*, 23(3), 271-296.

Veal, A. J. (1993). The concept of lifestyle: A review. *Leisure Studies*, 12, 233-252.

Stebbins, R. A. (1997). Lifestyle as a generic concept in ethnographic research. *Quality and Quantity*, 31, 347-360.

Nakamura, J. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2005). The concept of flow. In C. R. Snyder & S. Lopez, *Handbook of Positive Psychology*, pp. 89-105. Oxford, UK: Oxford.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2004). Flow, the secret to happiness. TED2004.

Scott, D. (1994). Recreation specialization in the social world of contract bridge, *Journal of Leisure Research*, 26(3), 275-195.

Scott, D. (2012). Serious leisure and recreation specialization: An uneasy marriage. *Leisure Sciences*, 34, 366-371.

Stebbins, R.A. (2012). Comment on Scott: Recreation specialization and the CL-SL continuum. *Leisure Sciences*, 34, 372-374.

Kuentzel, W.F. (2012). Comment on Scott: Is integration better?" *Leisure Sciences*, 34, 375-376.

### Personal Agenda

From U of T e-resources go to *Dissertation & Thesis Full Text* and search for your topic. From U of T e-resources go to interdisciplinary databases (*Scholar's Portal*, *Project Muse*, *Web of Knowledge*) and search for your topic. Visit Digital Library at the SLP website and review the series "Leisure Reflections" by Robert A. Stebbins; select and read any relevant to your topic. Read, organize, and reflect on all of the above; these tasks will continue over the duration of the semester. Make an appointment with the instructor to discuss your topic and research progress thus far (optional).

## Block 5: The SLP and Information Phenomena

### General Level

Discussion Group: March 11, 3:00-5:00; Discussion host is David.

Kari, J. & Hartel, J. (2007). Information and higher things in life: Addressing the pleasurable and the profound in information science. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 58 (8), 1131-1147.

Hartel, J. (2010). Hobby and leisure information and its user. In M. J. Bates, & M. N. Maack (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* (3rd Edition). New York: Taylor and Francis.

Stebbins, R. A. (2009). Leisure and its relationship to library and information science: Bridging the gap. *Library Trends*, 57, 618-631.

Law, J. & Lynch, M. (1988). Lists, field guides, and the descriptive organization of seeing: Birdwatching as an exemplary observational activity. *Human Studies*, 11, 271-303.

Lee, C. P. & Trace, C. B. (2009). The Role of information in a community of hobbyist collectors. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 60(3), 621-637.

Wilson, M. L. and Elswailer, D. (2010). Casual-leisure searching: the Exploratory search scenarios that break our current models. In: *4th International Workshop on Human-Computer Interaction and Information Retrieval*, New Brunswick, 28-31.

### 🗨️ Personal Agenda

Locate writings on your topic in information studies. Go to subject databases (at <http://resource.library.utoronto.ca/a-z/subject.cfm?subject=57>) and search comprehensively. Valuable articles may not mention *your topic* but discuss an information-related concept of great relevance. Locate and skim the special issue of *Library Trends* on serious leisure. Read, organize, and reflect on all of the above; these tasks will continue over the duration of the semester. Make an appointment with the instructor to discuss your topic and research progress thus far (optional).

### Block 6: Topic TBD

Discussion Group: March 25, 3:00-5:00; Discussion host is Reagan. Readings and topic TBD.

Happy Reading

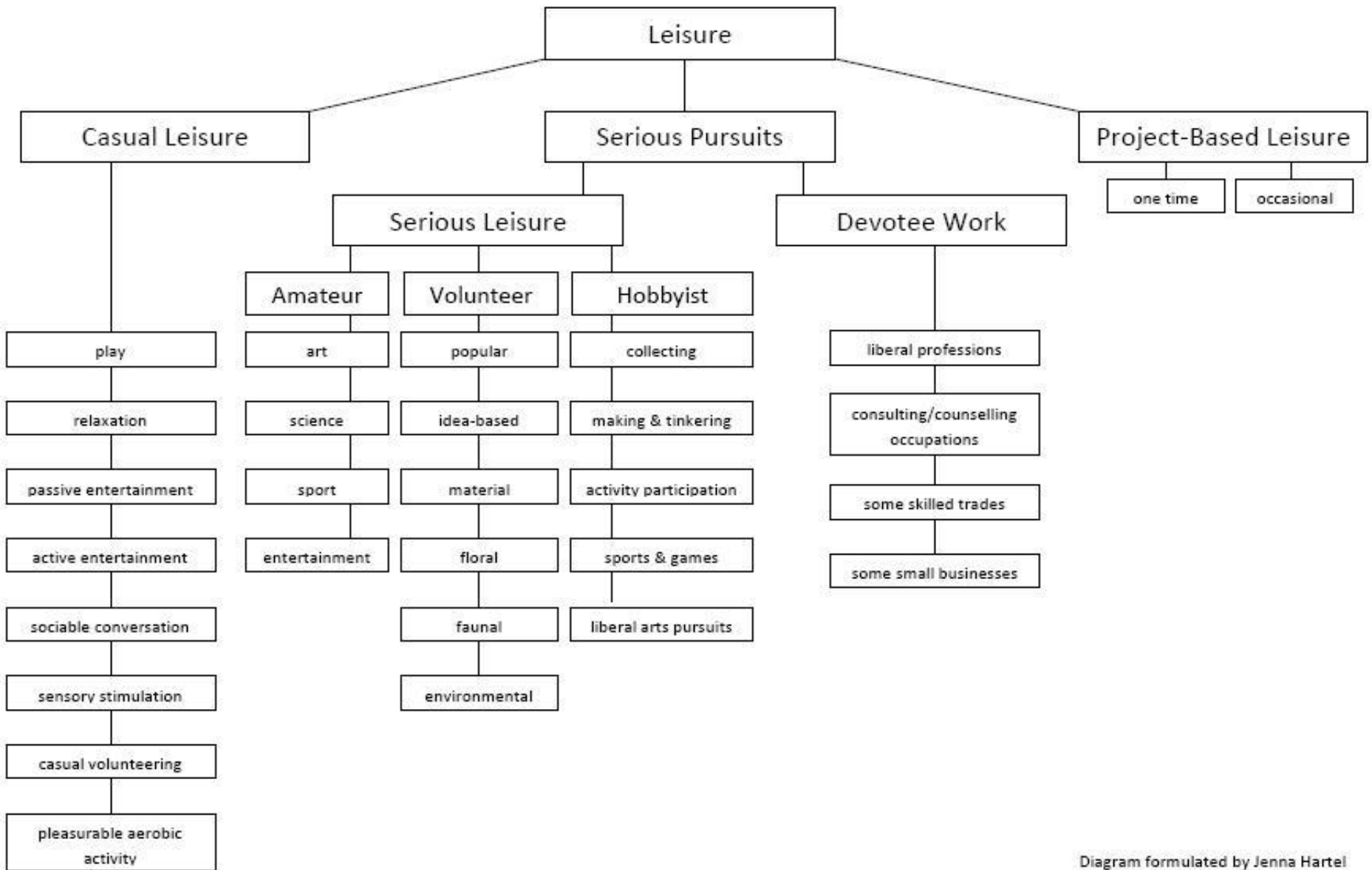


Diagram formulated by Jenna Hartel