INFO 6940
Seminar in Research and Research Methodology

Contact Information

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Voice: 940-369-8393

*Use the Blackboard Learn Discussions and Course Messages tools for all course-related communication.

Course Description

This course focuses on the nature of scientific inquiry and the design and conduct of research. Students will develop an understanding of epistemology in the context of knowledge claims and the research process. The course engages students in the identification of research problems of interest in information science, and the articulation of problem statements and research questions. Students will examine and learn major research approaches and associated methodologies for data collection and analysis. These topics provide the foundation for choosing and developing appropriate research designs. This is not simply a methods course.

Goals and Objectives

The primary goal for this course is: Prepare doctoral students with a foundation for conducting systematic and rigorous research.

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of philosophical underpinnings for knowledge claims
- Understand the process from research to publication
- Write problem statements and research questions
- Identify appropriate research approaches and methodologies for research problems
- Describe major research approaches and associated methodologies for data collection and analysis
- Design a research study
- Learn to write publishable research papers

Expectations

This is a 3-credit hour, doctoral-level course. Students should plan to work approximately 12 hours per week outside of class for readings, assignments, online discussions, etc. By maintaining this level of effort throughout the semester, your are likely to be successful in
the course. In addition, this effort will help you develop full comprehension of the subject matter. This is a reading- and writing-intensive course.

Students should be prepared to engage in discussions and exchange of ideas during weekly class meeting and the online discussions.

**Course Format**

This course takes the form of a traditional face-to-face seminar that meets weekly for approximately 3 hours. The seminar format provides for rich interaction among the students and instructor through discussions and presentations. It promotes intensive study and exchange of ideas expected of doctoral students.

The course uses Blackboard Learn, UNT’s online learning management system, as a supplement to the weekly meetings. Students will use the communication tools in Blackboard Learn for online discussions and emailing the instructor. GoToMeeting will be used for any online synchronous chats (if they occur). Course materials will be available from the course site on Blackboard Learn and assignments will be submitted to the instructor through Blackboard Learn.

**Requirements**

**Readings**

The required textbook for this course is:

- **Title:** *Methods of Educational and Social Science Research: The Logic of Methods*. Third Edition. Paperback.
- **Author:** David R. Krathwohl
- **ISBN-10:** 1577665767
- **ISBN-13:** 978-1577665762

In addition, there are required readings associated with course topics. These readings are from the scholarly literature. Almost all of these required readings are available online. Students are expected to go beyond the required readings as part of fulfilling course requirements and assignments.

**Style Manuals**

In written reports, students are required to cite sources according to the format rules in the APA style manual:


Style manuals are available in the reference sections of university bookstores, online and retail bookstores, and university libraries.

Also, see Dr. Linda Schamber's *Tips for Coursework* [http://courses.unt.edu/schamber/TipsForCoursework.pdf](http://courses.unt.edu/schamber/TipsForCoursework.pdf), which is an
excellent resource for using style manuals and for writing, copyediting, making oral presentations, and other guidelines.

**Technology**

Reliable broadband Internet access is required.

You should have at least two different web browsers installed on your computer. Browsers may interact differently with different web resources. Therefore, please make sure you have current versions of at least the following three browsers installed on your computer for this class:

- Chrome
- Firefox
- Internet Explorer

To access some course materials, you must have the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader on your system. Adobe Acrobat Reader is free. To download, go to [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#).

**Assignments**

The Assignments for this course and their final grade distribution are listed in table below. Details about each of these assignments are contained in documents in the Assignments and Activities area of the course site.

**Table 1. Assignments and Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>% of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resource Identification (2% each)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource 1. Writing problem statements</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource 2. Qualitative methods</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource 3. Quantitative methods</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource 4. Responsible conduct of research</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource 5. Most relevant journals and conferences</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Papers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1. What Is research?</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2: Theories and their applications</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 3: Research methods and their applications</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Paper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 4. Analysis of published research</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 5. Draft of a publishable research paper</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grading

Grade Distribution

Grades indicate the degree to which a student completes assignments according to stated requirements. Grades are determined on a 100-point scale (90-100 = A, 80-89 = B, etc.). The grade of A signifies superior work beyond basic requirements of the assignment; B signifies adequate work in response to the requirements; and C signifies that work does not meet the basic requirements.

Participation

Participation is a requirement in this class. Active participation in the weekly meetings is critical in this course's seminar format. Engagement in online discussions between class meetings is expected. If you will be absent from a class meeting, you must contact the instructor in advance via blackboard mail messages or a telephone call to the instructor's office phone.

Due dates

To facilitate timely grading, all assignments must be submitted on time. One-half grade will be deducted for each day an assignment is late (i.e., not submitted at the date/time specified). An exception can be made if a student absolutely cannot meet the deadline AND notifies the instructor before the due date.

Written reports

Both the substantive content of written reports and the quality of the writing will be considered. Substantive content includes completeness and adherence to the assignment, knowledge of appropriate concepts, strong supporting material, and reasonable conclusions or solutions. Quality of writing covers organization and clarity of expression, appropriate use of references, and correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. References must be made according to the APA Style Manual (see above). Up to one-half grade will be deducted for inaccurate references or references that don't follow APA guidelines. Please see the Format Requirements for Papers document available on the course website and follow the guidelines for formatting your papers.

Incomplete

The UNT Graduate Catalog describes and explains grading policies. A grade of Incomplete (I) will be given only for a justifiable reason and only if the student is passing the course. The student is responsible for meeting with the instructor to request an incomplete and discuss requirements for completing the course. If an incomplete is not removed within the time frame agreed to by instructor and student, the instructor may assign a grade of F.
Withdrawal

The *UNT Graduate Catalog* describes and explains withdrawal policies and deadlines. The UNT semester course schedule lists specific deadlines regarding withdrawal. A grade of Withdraw (W) or Withdraw-Failing (WF) will be given depending on a student's attendance record and grade earned. Please note that a student who simply stops attending class and does not file a withdrawal form may receive an F.

**Policies**

**ADA Accommodation**

If you have a disability and require accommodation under the terms of the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you must present a written accommodation request to the instructor by the end of the first week of the course. You should submit a request even if it is possible that accommodation may not be necessary later in the semester. You should register with the UNT Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA; [http://www.unt.edu/oda/](http://www.unt.edu/oda/) or 940-565-4323), which provides many kinds of support services. Procedures are explained in the Disability Accommodation Policy in the *UNT Policy Manual* [http://policy.unt.edu/policy/18-1-14](http://policy.unt.edu/policy/18-1-14).

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism and other unethical and illegal activities. Penalties range from reducing the grade for a test or assignment to revoking an academic degree already granted. Specific policies, penalties, and the appeals process are explained in *UNT Graduate Catalog*, the *Code of Student Conduct*, and the *Policy Manual*, all of which are available online. In addition, LIS adopted an *Academic Misconduct Policy* in 2005, and it provides additional information about the Department's policy. The instructor of this course abides by and enforces the Department of Library and Information Sciences and UNT policies on academic misconduct. Students should be particularly aware of the risks of plagiarism. A copy of the *SLIS Academic Misconduct Policy* is available in the LIS Department office.

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined in the UNT Policy, *Student Standards of Academic Integrity*, p. 4:

*Use of another’s thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student’s intent, including but not limited to:*

1. *the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.*

2. *the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials.*
The instructor has a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious violation of the policies of University of North Texas and the Department of Library and Information Sciences. The instructor assumes you have read and understood the SLIS Academic Misconduct Policy.

Penalties for Plagiarism

Plagiarism is illegal, unethical, and unacceptable. Any instances of plagiarism in student work will result in the following penalties:

- First offense: Final course grade reduced by one complete grade
- Second offense: Assignment of F (Fail) for final course grade

Any instances of plagiarism is also reported to appropriate UNT offices, which can impose additional penalties including suspension from UNT.

Conduct

Both instructor and students are expected to be prompt and prepared for class -- both the face-to-face weekly meeting and any synchronous online discussions/chats.

The instructor will be available for student consultation by appointment, and also online via mail and discussion in the Blackboard learning management system. The instructor asks that students refrain from making requests during the instructor's preparation time immediately prior to class and at the beginning of short breaks during class.

The instructor makes plans and keeps records based on students' attendance and work. The instructor requests that students contact or leave a message for the instructor if they cannot attend class, must arrive late or leave early, expect to submit work late, or intend to withdraw from the course.

Students participating in class discussions and group projects are expected to develop positive interaction skills and demonstrate professional behavior, whether onsite or online. This means interacting in a supportive and tactful manner based on mutual respect for each other's ideas and approaches.
### Table 2. Topics and Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Assignment Due (Saturday Midnight)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>August 23 - 29</td>
<td>Syllabus, Requirements, Self-introduction</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>August 30-September 5</td>
<td>Topic 1. Science, Inquiry, Research, and Publication</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>September 6-12</td>
<td>Topic 2. Research Processes and the Structure of a Research Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>September 13-19</td>
<td>Topic 3: Problems and Research Questions</td>
<td>Resource 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>September 20-26</td>
<td>Topic 4: Theories and Assumptions</td>
<td>Paper 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>September 27-October 3</td>
<td>Topic 5: Research Design Overview</td>
<td>Resource 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 4-10</td>
<td>Topic 6: Qualitative Methods</td>
<td>Paper 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 11-17</td>
<td>Topic 7: Quantitative Methods</td>
<td>Resource 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>October 18-24</td>
<td>Topic 8: Mixed Methods</td>
<td>Resource 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>October 25-31</td>
<td>Topic 9: Ethical Considerations and Responsible Conduct of Research</td>
<td>Paper 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 1-7</td>
<td>Topic 10: Evaluating Research and Information</td>
<td>Resource 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 8-14</td>
<td>Topic 11: Research Results Dissemination and Publishing</td>
<td>Paper 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>November 15-21</td>
<td>Topic 12: Getting Ready for the Dissertation Proposal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>November 22-28</td>
<td>Happy Thanksgiving!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>November 29-December 5</td>
<td>Term Project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>December 6</td>
<td>Term Project Report Due</td>
<td>Paper 5</td>
</tr>
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