901 - Doctoral Seminar in Information Studies

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES

901 – Doctoral Seminar in Information Studies, Section 001
Syllabus
Fall 2011

Instructor: Dietmar Wolfram
E-mail: dwolfram@uwm.edu
Fax: 414-229-6699

Office: Bolton Hall 510B
Phone: 414-229-4709

Meeting Times: Wednesday 9:30am-12:10pm, Bolton Hall, Room 521
Office Hours: Thursday 2:00pm-3:30pm. At other times by appointment.

DESCRIPTION:

Covers the nature of scholarship in information studies, socializes doctoral students to research culture, and addresses current research topics and methodologies in the field.

3 credits

PREREQUISITES: Grad st; L&I Sci 501, 511, 571, 591, or cons instr.

OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Articulate the nature of scholarship in information studies
- Outline philosophical issues that underlie research in information studies
- Apply ethical principles in research conduct
- Recognize and promote diversity and diverse perspectives in information studies research
- Evaluate the merits of published research and methodologies in information studies
- Compare research approaches applied to the study of research problems in our field

METHOD: Seminar/Discussion

Students with special needs should contact the instructor as early as possible for accommodations.

TEXT

Readings will be assigned from sources available through traditional or electronic reserve at the Golda Meir Library or publicly on the Web.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS:

9/7  **What is Scholarship?**


9/14  **Information Studies and Academe**


9/21  **Theoretical Perspectives – Within LIS and Adopted by LIS**


9/28 **The Research Process in Science and LIS – Ways of Knowing**


10/5 **Scientific Integrity & Research Ethics**

Guest: Michael Zimmer


Plus:


10/12 **Research Funding / Scholarly Publishing** (Readings with URLs are available under the Links tab in D2L)

I will be away at the ASIST meeting during this session. We’ll discuss these topics via D2L.


Browse one of the following federal funding agencies of interest. Note the points made regarding successful grant applications. (Links are available under the Content tab of the class D2L website)

Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)

National Institutes of Health (NIH)
http://www.ninds.nih.gov/funding/write_grant_doc.htm

National Science Foundation (NSF)

Current Research Topics/Issues & Student-led Seminar Topics

As researchers, we are defined by the topics we investigate. The methods we use are guided by the research questions we ask. The focus of these sessions will be on methods that may be used within the presented topic areas and how they are evaluated. SOIS faculty members will lead discussions on current areas of research in the field. Readings will be assigned based on the presented topics.

Students will also identify a relevant topic area for the week and lead the class in a discussion on the selected topic for one half of the class, focusing on research questions relevant to the topic and the methods used to address these questions.

10/19 User Studies
Guest Presenter: Prof. Iris Xie


10/26 **Exploratory Systems Research - Information Retrieval Visualization**

**Guest Presenter: Prof. Jin Zhang**


11/2 **Social Studies of the Internet – Tagging**

**Guest Presenter: Prof. Margaret Kipp**

(All readings are available under the Links tab in D2L).


11/9 Information Organization Research
Guest Presenter: Prof. Hope Olson


Olson, Hope A. (2001). The power to name: Representation in library catalogues. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 26(3): spring, pp.639–668. It is recommended that you read Olson 2003 before this reading since Olson 2003 explains the methodology applied in the research reported in the article.


11/16 Information Policy Research
Guest Presenter: Prof. Wil Peekhaus


11/23 No Class – Thanksgiving recess

11/30 Ethnographic Research
Guest Presenter: Prof. Laretta Henderson


C12/7 Mixed Methods
Guest Presenter: Prof. Jessica Moyer


12/14 Discussion of Reflective Journals/ Review

No readings

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic policies may be found on the UWM Web site at: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Acad_Aff/policy/uniformsyllabus.html. Additional policies may be found at the end of the syllabus.
ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due in class on specified dates. Grades will be reduced for late papers (one full grade for each week or part thereof) unless there are extenuating circumstances. Written assignments are to be word-processed. Submissions are to be double-spaced using a 12-point font with 1 to 1.25 inch margins. You may not resubmit work that has already been used in fulfillment of the requirement of this or any other course. Rules of academic conduct require that you not use the work of others without clearly indicating it as such. Academic misconduct may result in a lowered grade, no credit for a given assignment, or removal from the course. It is expected students will consult and appropriately cite the research and professional literature where appropriate. Grades will also be reduced for papers that include irrelevant content to “fill up space” to meet the length specifications for a paper. An example of this practice is submitting a paper that presents a cursory treatment of several topics when a detailed treatment of a single topic was expected.

Please rely on a commonly used style manual for your submissions (e.g. Turabian, Chicago, APA, MLA). These are available in the UWM Bookstore or may be purchased through online book vendors. If you are uncertain about how to cite electronic sources, consult one of the many electronic guides to citing electronic sources available on the net. Minimal reference content includes: author (if known), date (if given), title, URL, and date accessed. A good starting point is available at: http://www.libraryspot.com/grammarstyle.htm.

1. SEMINAR DISCUSSIONS – Undertaken over the course of the semester 20%

Students will lead one class discussion during the semester that will occupy the second half of class. The discussion topic will deal with a current research area in information studies. The topic selected cannot be the same as for the final paper. The student will first identify current topic of research interest in the selected area and develop a 20 minute presentation providing an overview of the topic area. A methodological approach used in the selected area will be identified, along with appropriate readings assigned to class members in consultation with the instructor. One week following the discussion, the student will submit a 5-page essay (approx. 1200 to 1500 words) reflecting on the significance of the selected method, the nature of the discussion, and the key points made by class members. Students will be assessed on their preparedness for the topic, treatment of the methodological issues, and summarization.

2. REFLECTIVE JOURNAL – Compiled over the Semester 15%

Each student will submit a weekly posting to the course D2L site outlining their assessment and thoughts on the topics covered. Weekly reflections should be approximately one double-spaced page (250-300 words) and are to be posted by the following week’s meeting time. Students may wish to respond to any of the following prompts:

- At what moment in class this week did you feel the most engaged with what was happening?
- At what moment in class did you feel most distanced or disconnected from what was happening?
- What action or incident that the instructor or other student took in class did you find the most helpful?
What action or incident that the instructor or other student took in class did you find the most confusing?
What happened in class this week surprised you the most?
How did you work through this reaction?
What impact did the class have on your perceptions of information studies in general?

Students will be prepared to discuss and summarize their experiences in the last week of class.

3. **FINAL PAPER** - Due in two parts 35%

Each student will submit a final paper that will immerse the student in the research and theoretical literature of an area of interest to them. The assignment will be due in two parts.

3.1 **Topic Proposal** - Due October 5th 10%

The initial submission will serve as a foundation for the final paper. It will consist of a one-page summary of the topic area selected plus a bibliography of 25-30 sources that demonstrate the adequacy of available literature. Initial feedback from the instructor will help the student in ensuring a viable topic with sufficient resources has been selected.

3.2 **Completed paper** - Due December 14th 25%

The final paper will: 1) define a general area for potential research; 2) survey key research and theoretical literature in that area including classic studies and influential “think” pieces as well as contemporary work, and; 3) identify the methods currently most used in the area. Use of existing review articles is encouraged to identify key literature (not in lieu of it) and as an indicator of what is deemed important. The paper will be substantial (approximately 20-25 pages), illustrating the student’s ability to evaluate an existing body of work. You may focus part of the paper on “what” is studied to provide a framework, but the emphasis of the paper must be on “how” researchers have studied the area of interest with reference to the literature.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION** 30%

It is expected that students will be active participants in the weekly discussions in class. Participation implies discussion contributions that are productive and insightful, and integrate the weekly readings.

**EVALUATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Discussion</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Journal</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9
UWM AND SOIS ACADEMIC POLICIES

The following links contain university policies affecting all SOIS students. Many of the links below may be accessed through a PDF-document maintained by the Secretary of the University: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf). For graduate students, there are additional guidelines from the Graduate School ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/StudentInfo/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/StudentInfo/)), including those found in the Graduate Student and Faculty Handbook: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/Publications/Handbook/](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/Grad_Sch/Publications/Handbook/).

**Students with disabilities.** If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of a course, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Students with disabilities are responsible to communicate directly with the instructor to ensure special accommodation in a timely manner. There is comprehensive coverage of issues related to disabilities at the Student Accessibility Center ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/MainOffice.html](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/MainOffice.html)), important components of which are expressed here: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/DSAD/SAC/SACltr.pdf).

**Religious observances.** Students’ sincerely held religious beliefs must be reasonably accommodated with respect to all examinations and other academic requirements, according to the following policy: [http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S1.5.htm). Please notify your instructor within the first three weeks of the Fall or Spring Term (first week of shorter-term or Summer courses) of any specific days or dates on which you request relief from an examination or academic requirement for religious observances.

**Students called to active military duty.** UWM has several policies that accommodate students who must temporarily lay aside their educational pursuits when called to active duty in the military (see [http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm](http://www3.uwm.edu/des/web/registration/militarycallup.cfm)), including provisions for refunds, readmission, grading, and other situations.

**Incompletes.** A notation of “incomplete” may be given in lieu of a final grade to a student who has carried a subject successfully until the end of a semester but who, because of illness or other unusual and substantial cause beyond the student’s control, has been unable to take or complete the final examination or some limited amount of other term work. An incomplete is not given unless the student proves to the instructor that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as indicated above ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S31.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S31.pdf)).

**Discriminatory conduct (such as sexual harassment).** UWM and SOIS are committed to building and maintaining a campus environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person, fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect, and encourages the members of its community to strive to reach their full potential. The UWM policy statement ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S47.pdf)) summarizes and defines situations that constitute discriminatory conduct. If you have questions, please contact an appropriate SOIS administrator.
**Academic misconduct.** Cheating on exams and plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, ranging from a failing grade for a course or assignment to expulsion from the University. See the following document ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/conduct.html)) or contact the SOIS Investigating Officer (currently the Associate Dean) for more information.

**Complaints.** Students may direct complaints to the SOIS Dean or Associate Dean. If the complaint allegedly violates a specific university policy, it may be directed to the appropriate university office responsible for enforcing the policy.

**Grade appeal procedures.** A student may appeal a grade on the grounds that it is based on a capricious or arbitrary decision of the course instructor. Such an appeal shall follow SOIS appeals procedures ([http://www4.uwm.edu/sois/academics/MLIS/mlisappeals.htm](http://www4.uwm.edu/sois/academics/MLIS/mlisappeals.htm)). Step 3 appeals for graduate students are handled through the Graduate School. These procedures are available in writing from the respective department chairperson or the Academic Dean of the College/School ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S28.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad%2Badmin_policies/S28.htm)).

**Examinations, Finals.** The Secretary of the University is authorized to prepare the final examination schedule. The time of the final examination for an individual or a class may be changed only with the prior approval of the dean or director of the respective college/school. The change will involve a postponement to a later date. For individuals with exam conflicts, a separate week at the very end of the exam week will be reserved to take one of the conflicting exams ([http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad+admin_policies/S22.htm](http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/acad+admin_policies/S22.htm)).