UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES

591 – Introduction to Research Methods in Library and Information Science, Section 202
Fall 2013
DRAFT Syllabus (subject to change)

Instructor: Dietmar Wolfram
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Fax: 414-229-6699

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:00pm. At other times by appointment.

Meeting Times: This is a Web-based class. There are no formal class meeting times. However, participation in at least three chat topic areas is expected. Chats will be scheduled based on student availability. At least five chat topic areas are planned.

DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces students to basic research concepts, methods, and evaluation in library and information science, and applications of research in the information professions.

3 credits U/G

PREREQUISITES: Jr st;
Basic computer literacy as outlined in the SOIS policy is required.

For 500 and 600 level courses it is recommended that an undergraduate student first consult with the appropriate instructor and/or advisor concerning the applicability of this specific course.

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

1. Understand the importance of research to theory and practice in library and information science

2. Identify the range of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed research methods used in library and information science

3. Understand at a functional level data analysis techniques used in library and information science research

4. Evaluate the merits of published research in library and information science

5. Design and conduct an action research project
6. Evaluate services in libraries or information centers

7. Understand the role of research methods within the diversity and equality contexts

8. Use basic statistical tools to conduct basic data analysis

**ALA COMPETENCIES ADDRESSED:**

1. The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.
2. The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.
3. The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.
4. The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.

**METHOD:** Lecture/Discussion

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

**TEXT**


Readings will also be assigned from other sources available through electronic reserve at the Golda Meir Library, through the D2L course site, or publicly on the Web.

**COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS:**

The course schedule will be finalized towards the beginning of semester. Topics will include

- **Overview of Research in Library and Information Science**
- **The Research Process**
- **Ethical Issues in Research & Institutional Review Boards**
- **The Research Proposal and Report; Evaluating Research**
- **Survey Research I: Overview & Sampling**
Survey Research II: Design

Experimental Research

Qualitative Research

Historical Research

Data Analysis

Introduction to Inferential Statistics

Inferential Statistics – Tests of difference and association

Funding & Disseminating Research

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic policies may be found on the UWM Web site at:
http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/. Additional policies may be found at the end of the syllabus.

ASSIGNMENTS

Written assignments are due by 4:30pm CDT/CST on the specified date. 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 typed, preferably word-processed. Papers are to be double-spaced using a 12-point font with 1 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 is expected.

Please rely on a commonly used style manual for your submissions (e.g. Turabian, Chicago, APA, MLA), for referencing sources in particular. 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 for referencing electronic sources is available at:

The course assignment requirements will comprise:
1. Critical reviews of readings (2 for graduate students, 1 for undergraduate students)

2. Test

3. Quantitative & qualitative analysis exercise (graduate students only)

4. Research Proposal
   - Pre-proposal
   - Methodology Summary
   - Full Proposal

CLASS PARTICIPATION

It is expected that students will participate in the discussions and chats on a regular basis. Not participating on a regular basis will result in a substantial penalty in your class participation grade and ultimately the final grade for the course regardless of how well you performed on the assignments for the class. Participation implies keeping up with class materials, posting contributions that are productive and insightful in addition to reading and responding to your classmates’ postings, along with participating in the scheduled chats. Regular participation also means that you are contributing to discussions on a consistent basis throughout the course and not just during selected weeks or only during the eleventh hour of each week’s discussion.

EVALUATION

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<tr>
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<th>Undergraduate Students</th>
<th>Graduate Students</th>
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<td>Critical Reviews</td>
<td>(1 review) 15%</td>
<td>(2 reviews) 25%</td>
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<td>Data Analysis Exercise</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project Pre-proposal &amp; Methodology</td>
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<td>Full Proposal</td>
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<td>Class Participation</td>
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GRADE ASSIGNMENT

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GRADE REQUIREMENT FOR MLIS STUDENTS:

If you are pursuing an MLIS degree, you need to earn at least a B to pass this course. See the policy at: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SOIS/academics/mlisrequirements.htm

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. Undergraduates may also find the Panther Planner and Undergraduate Student Handbook useful (http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/OSL/DOS/Handbook2005-06.pdf). For graduate students, there are additional guidelines from the Graduate School (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/.