Fall 2013
Room UTA 1.504
Wednesday, 9 am - 12 pm; August 28 – December 4

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TA: Sarah Buchanan
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Phone: 512-232-8364
Office: UTA 5.451
Office Hours: By appointment – email me and we’ll set up a time. If I’m in my office with the door open, you can drop in any time.

Best way to contact me: email

Course Description

Pursuing a Ph.D. is a commitment to a research career. The Research Enterprise course will introduce students to the nature of social research in information studies, types of knowledge and expertise needed, types of research careers, and the requirements of the Ph.D. program in the University of Texas School of Information. The Research Enterprise has the following objectives:

- Introduction to the range of research methods commonly used in information studies; the link between research questions and methods of addressing them; and the relationship between metatheory, theory, and research methods
- The importance of familiarity with prior scholarship and opportunities to practice relevant skills; how to find scholarly literature, organize studies for comparison and evaluation, and write (and re-write) a scholarly literature review
- Instruction and practice evaluating and critiquing research studies
- Instruction and practice to the process of planning and implementing a research design
- Instruction and practice for important scholarly competencies, including leading discussions, making and understanding s, and presenting ideas
- Overview of the basic requirements of the UT iSchool doctoral program, research and educational opportunities available at UT, faculty and student research interests, and familiarity with research careers

Course activities, both in and outside of class, are designed to accomplish these objectives.

Required Texts

Four books are required, listed below. Additional readings are in Blackboard in Course Documents or available through the UT Libraries (linked in Blackboard).

Course Expectations and Policies

To be successful, this course requires a substantial degree of participation from students: careful, engaged reading in preparation for each class, thoughtful and challenging contributions to in-class and Blackboard discussions, and committed engagement with assignments.

Vigorous intellectual interaction is a critical component of doctoral education and a building block of intellectual community. When in class, therefore, please turn off your electronic devices except for accessing assigned readings, taking notes, or monitoring urgent communications.

Students should regularly check email from each other, the TA, and the professor and reply promptly, even if it is only to say “I have received this and can’t respond yet.”

Assignments: Non-Blackboard based written assignments must be submitted using Microsoft Word or compatible file formats. This enables commenting and use of review tools. An assignment submitted late will receive a lower grade than an assignment of similar quality turned in on time. Students are expected to understand what constitutes plagiarism, both intentional and unintentional, and when paraphrasing is plagiarism.

Formal Assignments

**Human Subjects Certification:** All students must email me a copy of their certificate showing they have completed the UT or other IRB training by September 9. Instructions are in Blackboard announcements.

**Conflict of Interest Training:** All researchers at the University of Texas at Austin must complete this training before engaging in research at the University of Texas at Austin or they must provide evidence of having completed the training at another institution in The University of Texas System within the last four years. Submit a copy of your certificate via email by September 9. Link to instructions in Blackboard announcements.

**Participation (10%):** Includes evidence of careful reading and readiness to participate in discussion.

**Discussion Leader (10%):** Twice during the semester you will lead discussion, bringing in discussion questions and using communication skills to manage the discussion, ensuring all voices are heard. Due dates appear on the course schedule by your name and “DL,” based on random assignment.

**Colloquium Attendance (5%):** Attend all iSchool colloquia, typically scheduled at 3:15 pm on Tuesdays. Be prepared to discuss the research methods and philosophical assumptions of the speaker(s) in class. Talk to Lecia in case of conflict.

**Senior Peers’ Wisdom (2%):** Interview a more senior doctoral student of your choice about courses he or she has taken on campus, suggestions for success, and other wisdom. Present what you learn to the class in no more than ten minutes. Due dates are on the course schedule by your name and “SPW,” based on random assignment.

**Faculty Interests (3%):** Investigate two faculty members’ areas of interest, experience, and typical methodological choices. This will help you when it’s time to choose your committee. You will share the results with the class by posting to the Blackboard Faculty Interests Wiki (no more than about 500 words per faculty member) and by presenting orally in class (no more than ten minutes each, including questions). Faculty and each student’s due dates are on course schedule next to “FI,” based on random assignment. More details in Blackboard.

**Argumentation Homework (15%):** Crafting and presenting good s is a critical competency for a scholar. We will take advantage of online discussion tools to practice crafting s that become increasingly complex over the semester. You will be randomly assigned as primary arguer and primary responder twice during the semester, as shown on the schedule. All students are expected to read the assigned chapter each week and experiment with exercises from A Workbook for Arguments. Each exercise will have a dedicated thread in the Blackboard "Discussion Board" within which students should post s and responses. Each week a “primary arguer” (PA) and “primary responder” (PR) will be assigned a set of exercises to be posted to Blackboard as follows:
Due by Monday, noon of each week: The PA will post answers to assigned exercises in a Blackboard Discussion forum.

Due by Monday, 11:59 pm of each week: The PR will evaluate that response, offer alternatives, praise/critique it.

Due by Tuesday, 11:59 pm of each week: Non-primaries will post thoughtful questions and comments based on those posts.

Comments and questions will be raised in class.

**Review of Literature (40%)**: A review of scholarly literature of an information studies-related question, issue, or phenomenon of your choice. This review should lead to a deep understanding of the historical scholarship of the issue as well as the state of the art of its study. The review will be submitted during mid-semester, reviewed by instructor and a fellow student within two weeks, then revised for your final paper. Detailed requirements in a separate handout. Grade distribution: First draft (due October 16): 20%; Revision (due December 11): 15%; Structured review of peer's paper (Due October 23): 5%.

**Research Design (15%)**: Based on an interest of your choice, you will design a triangulated study: one that uses two distinct methods. Due December 4. Details of assignment in a separate handout. Length 10 pages maximum. You will present your design on the last day of class.

### Course Schedule

#### Abbreviations used in the schedule:
Readings – B: Blaikie; G&K: Girden, & Kabacoff; M&W: Morrow & Weston; R: Ridley
Assignments – DL: Discussion Leader; FI: Faculty Interests; SPW: Senior Peers’ Wisdom

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
<th>Argument Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>August 28</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to the course, to each other, and to the doctoral program in the iSchool</td>
<td>Doctoral Student Handbook (ver. Fall 2011) B: Ch. 3</td>
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<td>Doctoral program milestones</td>
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<td>Research questions and purposes</td>
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<td><strong>September 4</strong></td>
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<td>Knowledge/epistemology, reasoning, major philosophies of science Leading discussion</td>
<td>Discussion Leader Assignment Okasha, Ch. 1-3 M&amp;W: Intro, Ch. 1</td>
<td>DUE Monday, September 9: Human Subjects Certificate</td>
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<td>Visitor: UT Librarian Joe Dobbs</td>
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<td>SPW: ()</td>
<td>PA: PR: Exercises: 1.4, 1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>September 11</strong></td>
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<td>Finding/using sources, organizing them, referencing</td>
<td>M&amp;W: Ch. 4 R: Ch. 3-5, 7</td>
<td>DL: (R)</td>
<td>PA: PR: Exercises: 4.3, 4.4</td>
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| **September 18**  
Intro to literature reviews  
Major philosophies of science (cont.) | M&W: Ch. 2  
R: Ch. 1-2  
Okasha, Ch. 4-5 | FI: ()  
DL: (Okasha) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 2.6, 2.7 |
| **September 25**  
Intro to research design  
Structuring the literature review | M&W: Appendix I  
B: Ch. 4, 6-7  
R: Ch. 6 | SPW:  
FI: ()  
DL: (B) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 10.3, 10.4 |
| **October 2**  
Ethnography  
Writing the literature review | M&W: Ch. 7  
Geertz  
Bloustein & Wood  
R: 8 | FI: ()  
DL: (Geertz, Bloustein & Wood) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 7.6, 7.8 |
| **October 9**  
Narrative  
Trustworthiness  
Interviewing  
Voice | M&W: Ch. 3  
G&K: Ch. 3  
R: Ch. 9  
Lincoln & Guba  
Barker | SPW:  
FI: ()  
DL: (Lincoln & Guba, Barker) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 3.2, 3.3 |
| **October 16**  
Theory in research design  
Grounded theory | B: Ch. 5  
Charmaz, Ch. 1 | DUE: First draft of literature review | |
| **October 23**  
Survey research  
Descriptive statistics  
Measurement | M&W: Appendix II  
G&K: Ch. 1, 4  
Sapsford, Ch. 1, 5  
Trochim Descriptive Statistics | DUE: Review of peer’s literature review  
FI: ()  
DL: (Sapsford) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 11.1, 11.2 |
| **October 30**  
Causation and correlation  
Regression  
Inferential statistics | M&W Ch. 5  
G&K Ch. 5-6  
Sapsford, Ch. 8-10 | SPW:  
FI: ()  
DL: (Sapsford) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 5.1, 5.4 |
| **November 6**  
Factor analysis  
Experimentation  
Scales | M&W: Ch. 6  
G&K: Ch. 7, 9, 11  
Sapsford, Ch. 11 | FI: ()  
DL: (G&K) | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 6.3, 6.4 |
| **November 13**  
Discourse Analysis  
Visual Analysis  
Design Scholarship | M&W (online exercise)  
Gray & Malins, Ch. 1  
Fallman  
Jewitt & Oyama | SPW:  
FI: ()  
DL: (Fallman, Jewitt & Oyama) | All students both PA, PR from online 1.3 |
| **November 20**  
Historical and policy research with William Aspray  
Grant writing | M&W: Ch. 8  
Little | FI: ()  
DL: (Little)  
Lecia on grants | PA:  
PR:  
Exercises: 8.2, 8.3 |
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<td>December 4</td>
<td>Presentations of research designs</td>
<td>DUE: Research design</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 11</td>
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<td>DUE: Revision of Literature Review</td>
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**Readings in Blackboard**


**Course Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

This course will depend on collaborative learning, shown in decades of research to increase student learning and feeling of belonging to an academic community and to build social identity. It is assumed that students may produce original work in collaboration and not submit someone else’s work as if it were their own. It is also assumed that students are taking this course because they want to work at learning and not only because they want a grade.

Here is the University of Texas’ Statement on Academic Integrity:

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work. You are encouraged to study together and to discuss information and concepts covered in lecture and the sections with other students. You can give "consulting" help to or receive "consulting" help from such students. However,
this permissible cooperation should never involve one student having possession of a copy of all or part of work done by someone else, in the form of an e mail, an e mail attachment file, a diskette, or a hard copy. Should copying occur, both the student who copied work from another student and the student who gave material to be copied will both automatically receive a zero for the assignment. Penalty for violation of this Code can also be extended to include failure of the course and University disciplinary action. During examinations, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you compare papers, copy from others, or collaborate in any way. Any collaborative behavior during the examinations will result in failure of the exam, and may lead to failure of the course and University disciplinary action.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed. See website below for more information: [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssl/providing.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssl/providing.php)

**University Electronic Mail Notification Policy: Check your Email**

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. **Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week.** The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at [http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html](http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html).

**This Course Uses Blackboard**

This course uses Blackboard, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. Student enrollments in each course are updated each evening. Blackboard can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys. **You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements.** As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. **Notification of these disruptions will be posted on the Blackboard login page. Scheduled downtimes are not an excuse for late work.** However, if there is an unscheduled downtime for a significant period of time, I will make an adjustment if it occurs close to the due date. Blackboard is available at [http://courses.utexas.edu](http://courses.utexas.edu). Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm, so plan accordingly.