LIS 505: Introduction to Research in Library and Information Studies

Course Outline

Winter 2018

Instructor: Tami Oliphant
Email: toliphan@ualberta.ca
Phone: (780) 492-2033
Office: 3-04 Rutherford South
Office hours: By appointment

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the fundamental concepts, approaches, methodologies and uses of research in library and information environments. Includes research design, proposal writing, identifying and defining research problems, critically evaluating and analyzing research, and applying research findings to solve practical problems in libraries and information centres. Required course.

Course Objectives: By the end of the course, students will:

- Understand the importance of research in library and information studies and in various library and information environments,
- Become intelligent readers and producers of research, which involves the ability to critically analyze relevant research literature in library and information studies;
- Become familiar with the entire research process and the contexts in which research is carried out in order to assist users who are themselves engaged in research; and,
- Demonstrate an understanding of the research process by preparing a research proposal to study a problem relevant to library and information studies.

Measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs):

- Drawing upon course content, students will demonstrate an understanding of the research process by preparing a research proposal to study a user-centered problem in LIS;
- After critically engaging with LIS literature, students will demonstrate their knowledge and comprehension of the core constituent elements of research by critiquing a relevant LIS research article; and,
After reading diverse research articles, students will demonstrate their ability to locate, evaluate, and synthesize research by writing an academic literature review on a user-centered problem in LIS

Content:

- Introduction (research in LIS; quantitative, qualitative, and textual approaches)
- Research in library and information studies and research in practice
- Research problems in library and information studies
- Professional and research literature; literature reviews
- Research design, planning a research project, and research questions/hypotheses
- Research ethics
- Survey research and sampling
- Data collection and analysis
- Bibliometrics and citation analysis
- Descriptive statistics
- Data visualization and data management
- Assessment and evaluation and Internet-based research
- Implementation, dissemination and budget planning
- Participatory research, action-based research, research in practice

Methods:

A combination of lectures, readings, discussions, computer demonstrations, hands-on exercises, and presentations will be used throughout the course. Where possible, guest lectures and/or special presentations will also be included.

Course Relationships:

LIS 501 and LIS 503 are prerequisites for this course. LIS 505 is a prerequisite to LIS 597, LIS 599 and THES 900.

Required Texts: Readings as assigned.

Assignments and Weighting:

Class Participation: 10 marks—throughout the term
In-class Research Evaluation Exercise: 5 marks
Research Proposal: 55 marks
Research Proposal Summary: 10 marks
Literature Review: 10 marks
Research Proposal: 35 marks
Statistics Assignment: 10 marks
Research Article Evaluation: 20 marks

School of Library and Information Studies Grading Statement:

Grades reflect professional judgements of student achievement made by instructors. These judgements are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in class. The instructor should mark in terms of raw scores, rank the assignments in order of merit, and with due attention to the verbal descriptions of the various grades, assign an appropriate final letter grade.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

Students should also be mindful of the SLIS Copyright Policy (http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/Resources/~/media/slis/Documents/Resources/SLISPoliciesandDocuments/SLIS_Copyright_Policy.pdf).

Inclusive Language and Equity:

The Faculty of Education is committed to providing an environment of respect for all people within the university community and to educating faculty, staff, and students in developing teaching and learning contexts that are welcoming to all. The Faculty recommends that students and staff use inclusive language to create a classroom atmosphere in which students’ experiences and views are treated with equal respect and value in relation to their gender, racial background, sexual orientation and ethnic background. Students who require accommodations in this course due to a disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with Specialized Support and Disability Services.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is permitted only with the prior written consent of the professor or if recording is part of an approved accommodation plan.

Policy about course outlines can be found in Section 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.