

Syllabus

LS 502: Research Methods
University of Alabama
School of Library and Information Studies
Summer Session 2,

Tuesday and Thursday 6:00 p.m. – 10:15 p.m.

July 8-August 6, 2010

Instructor:

Naomi Gold

Preferred method of communication:
Secondary method of communication:

eLearning Email
negold@bama.ua.edu

Course Description

Students will be introduced to principles and practices of carrying out a research project from inception to completion, with an emphasis on social research in library and information center environments. This course will emphasize the steps and procedures involved in the research process.

Required Textbooks

All reading materials will be posted to our eLearning site on the respective week's page. In the event that eLearning experiences technical difficulties, the readings will be emailed as attachments.

Course Objectives

Students will learn how to do the following:

- Describe and evaluate the process and significance of research activity in the field of librarianship
- Understand the process of designing a research proposal
- Think critically about research aims, approaches and outcomes
- Define what research is and is not
- Learn how to write an annotated bibliography and literature review
- Complete a poster presentation suitable for submission to a library conference, or for use in a presentation

Assignments and Grading

There will be four graded exercises, which are weighted equally in the grading scheme. There will also be non-graded activities that will guide your own self-study, especially as it relates to practical, hands-on experience.

Exercise 1: Evaluating Research 25%

Due Date: Thursday July 15

Exercise 2: The Annotated Bibliography 25%

Due Date: Thursday July 22

Exercise 3: The Literature Review 25%

Due Date: Thursday July 29

Exercise 4: Poster Presentation 25%

Due Date: August 3 and 5

Exercises: The Big Picture

The Big Picture

The exercises in this class are **interrelated**. You will be following the process of identifying a topic for research that interests you, and/or that is related to the area of librarianship you intend to pursue. You will be accomplishing the following tasks: 1) evaluating and comparing two articles on the topic from two different types of journals, one scholarly/peer-reviewed and one designed for more general consumption; 2) preparing an annotated bibliography of resources on your chosen topic; 3) performing a literature review of materials on your chosen topic; 4) preparing a research poster suitable for submission to a library conference, or for use in future teaching and presentation work. You will be presenting these posters during our final two classes.

Citation Practices

Citation is an essential part of the writing process in this field and in all academic writing, and it's essential to cite the materials you use either as direct quotation, paraphrase, or description of another writer's ideas. ***You may use any citation style you choose: Turabian/Chicago, APA, or MLA.***

Course Schedule

<p>Class 1</p>	<p>July 8—Thurs.</p>	<p><u>Topic</u> What is Research?</p> <p><u>Agenda</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overview and Introductions - Review of Syllabus - Obtaining Readings - Reviewing Resources - Exercise 1 - PowerPoint presentation <p><u>Discussion of Exercise 1: Evaluating Research</u> Due Thursday July 15</p>
<p>Class 2</p>	<p>July 13—Tues.</p>	<p><u>Topics</u> Research Tools The Research Problem</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Annotated Bibliographies” from the Norton Guide to Field Writing - Katzer, et al. <u>Evaluating Information</u>. “Purpose: What We Are Trying to Do;” “Assumptions: What We Believe About How We Know;” “Observation: Seeing Is Not Believing;” “Communication: Writing Adds Other Problems,” (chapters 1-4) - Powell and Connaway Chapter 1 <p><u>Discussion of Exercise 2: The Annotated Bibliography</u> Due Thursday July 22</p>
<p>Class 3</p>	<p>July 15—Thurs.</p>	<p><u>Topics</u> The Literature Review</p> <p><u>Readings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Afzal, “Argument for Increased Use of Qualitative Research in LIS...” - Chopra, “Contribution of Modern Statistics to Modern Progress.” - Creswell. <u>Research Design</u>. “Review of the Literature,” Chapter 2 - Gewen, “What Are the Odds that a Handy, Quotable Statistic is Lying?” <p><u>Discussion of Exercise 3: The Literature Review</u> Due Thursday July 29</p> <p><u>DUE Exercise 1: Evaluating Research</u></p>

<p>Class 4</p>	<p>July 20-Tues.</p>	<p>Topics <i>Guest Speaker: Dr. Elizabeth Aversa, Director, School of Library and Information Studies, University of Alabama</i></p> <p>Readings - Adler, Ewing, Taylor, "Citation Statistics." - Katzer, et al. <u>Evaluating Information</u>. "Interpretation...and then You Read It;" "Bias: A Systematic Error;" "Noise: The Other Type of Error," Chapters 5-8 - Monastarsky, "Impact Factor: The Number That's Devouring Science."</p>
<p>Class 5</p>	<p>July 22—Thurs.</p>	<p>Topics Historical Research Descriptive Research</p> <p>Readings - Creswell. <u>Research Design</u>. "The Introduction," "The Purpose Statement," and "Research Questions and Hypotheses," Chapters 4, 5, 6 - Powell and Connaway Chapters 7 and 8 - Westbrook, Lynn. "Analyzing Community Information Needs: A Holistic Approach." <u>Library Administration & Management</u> 14 (Winter 2000): 26-30. Available on WilsonWeb.</p> <p><u>DUE Exercise 2: The Annotated Bibliography</u></p>
<p>Class 6</p>	<p>July 27—Tues.</p>	<p>Topics Ethical Considerations and the Use of Human Subjects</p> <p>Readings: - Creswell Chapter 3 - Powell and Connaway Chapter 3</p> <p>Review and be prepared to discuss <u>National Institutes of Health Timeline of Laws Related to the Protection of Human Subjects</u>: http://history.nih.gov/about/timelines_laws_human.html</p> <p>The University of Alabama's Institutional Review Board Site http://osp.ua.edu/site/irb.html</p> <p>Complete the following: http://www.research.umn.edu/consent/menu_soc.html</p>
<p>Class 7</p>	<p>July 29—Thurs.</p>	<p>Topics <i>Guest Speaker: Jason D. Phillips, Government Documents Librarian, Mississippi State University/Georgetown University</i></p>

		<u>DUE Exercise 3: The Literature Review</u>
Class 8	Aug 3—Tues.	<u>Topics</u> Poster Session Presentations DUE Exercise 4, POSTER SESSION PRESENTATIONS
Class 9	Aug 5—Thurs.	<u>Topics</u> Poster Session Presentations DUE Exercise 4, POSTER SESSION PRESENTATIONS