The Research Enterprise (INF 391D.11)

Room UTA 1.504 Monday, 3 pm-6 pm; September 8-December 5, 2014

Instructor: Lecia Barker

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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 will introduce students to approaches and methods of social research in information studies, types of knowledge and expertise needed, and types of research careers. The course will also introduce students to the requirements of the Ph.D. program in the University of Texas at Austin School of Information, and to the research areas and approaches of faculty and fellow Ph.D. students. The Research Enterprise has the following objectives:

- Introduction to the range of research approaches and 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 critical importance of familiarity with prior scholarship and opportunities to practice related skills: how to find scholarly literature, organize studies for comparison and evaluation, write (and re-write) a scholarly literature review, and critique a peer's literature review;
- Instruction and practice evaluating and critiquing research studies, including considering the ways in which articles are part of a conversation with other researchers and rhetorical artifacts;
- Introduction to the process of planning and implementing a research design;
- Instruction and practice for important scholarly competencies, including leading discussions, making and understanding arguments, and presenting ideas; and
- 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

Two books are required, listed below. Additional readings will be made available in Canvas or are available as digital texts through the UT Libraries. Links to digital texts appear in their citations.

Blaikie, N. (2009). *Designing social research* (2nd ed.). Polity.

Ridley, D. (2012). *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students* (2nd ed.). Sage.

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 discussions, and committed engagement with assignments. It is through discussion and often disagreement that humans explore information that supports learning and good decision making. Discussion requires that each of us offer good reasons for the positions we take; articulating reasons will become increasingly important as students progress in the program.

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 when you are 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 will respond tomorrow." Lateness in arrival to class, colloquiua, meetings, etc. is unprofessional and will negatively shape others' perceptions of you.

Assignments: 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 15. Instructions are in Canvas.

Conflict of Interest Training and Financial Interest Disclosure: 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 15. Link to instructions in Canvas.

Participation (20%): 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 solicited and heard. Due dates appear on the course schedule by your name and "DL," based on random assignment.

Senior Peers' Wisdom (5%): Interview any two doctoral students in cohorts preceding yours 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 (5%): Investigate three 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 Canvas (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 Canvas.

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 at 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 20): 20%
> Structured review of peer's paper (Due October 27): 5%
> Revision (due December 5): 15%

Research Design (20%): Based on an interest of your choice, you will design a triangulated study: one that uses two distinct methods. This is an informal assignment, but should be well thought out. Due December 1. You will present and discuss your design on the last day of class.

Course Schedule

Abbreviations used in the schedule:

> Readings – B: Blaikie; R: Ridley

> Assignments – DL: Discussion Leader; FI: Faculty Interests; SPW: Senior Peers' Wisdom

The schedule shown below is subject to change.

Date/Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
September 8 Introduction to the course, to each other, and to the doctoral program in the iSchool Introduction to research design	Doctoral Student Handbook (New) B: Introduction, Ch. 1	
September 15 Knowledge/epistemology, reasoning, major philosophies of science Leading discussion	Discussion Leader Assignment Okasha, Ch. 1-3 (p. 25+)	DUE: Human Subjects Certificate and Conflict of Interests Training SPW: FI: DL: Lecia (Okasha)
September 22 Major philosophies of science (cont.) Designing social research	Okasha, Ch. 4-5 (p. 97+) B: Ch. 2	DL: (B)
September 29 Visitor: UT Librarian Joe Dobbs (3-4:15) Intro to literature reviews	R: Ch. 1-5	FI: DL:
October 6 Research reports: components, rhetoric Structuring the literature review	R: Ch. 6-7 Vora & Boellstorff Bazerman	SPW: FI: DL: (Bazerman)
October 13 Writing the literature review Research questions and strategies for answering them Data	R: Ch. 8-9 B: Ch. 3-4, 6	FI: DL: (B)
October 20 Introduction to qualitative approaches Trustworthiness	Guest, Namey, & Mitchell Geertz Lincoln & Guba	SPW: FI: DL: ()
October 27 Historical scholarship with Prof. Aspray Discourse and visual analysis	Little *To be announced* Jewitt and Oyama	**DUE: First draft of literature review** DL: Jane Gruning (tba)

November 3 Theory in research design Grounded theory	B: Ch. 5-6 Charmaz, Ch. 1, 6	**DUE: Review of peer's literature review** FI: DL: (Charmaz)
November 10 Introduction to quantitative research	Sapsford, Ch. 1, 5-8	SPW: FI: DL:
November 17 Understanding descriptive and inferential statistics	*To be announced*	FI: DL:
November 24 Design-based research Experimentation	Bowler & Large Greeno Webster & Sell, Ch. 1, 3	SPW: FI: DL:
December 1 Presentations of research designs Grant writing		**DUE: Research design** DL: Lecia
December 5		**DUE: Revision of Literature Review**

Readings in Canvas

Bazerman, C. (1981). What written knowledge does: Three examples of academic discourse. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences, 11*, 361-382.

Bowler, L., & Large, A. (2008). Design-based research for LIS. Library & Information Science Research, 30(1), 39–46. doi:10.1016/j.lisr.2007.06.007

Charmaz, K. (2006). Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis. London: Sage. From UT Libraries here: http://tinyurl.com/8v5uyrv

Geertz, C. (1973). Chapter 1: Thick description: Toward an interpretive theory of cultures. *The interpretation of cultures: Selected essays*. New York: Basic Books, pp. 3-30. Found here: http://tinyurl.com/Geertz-reading

Greeno, J. G. (2006). Learning in activity. In R. K. Sawyer (Ed.), The Cambridge handbook of the learning sciences (pp. 79-96). New York: Cambridge University Press. Found here: (scroll to p. 79) http://tinyurl.com/CambridgeHandbookLS

Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2012). Chapter 1: Qualitative research: defining and designing. In *Collecting qualitative data: A field manual for applied research* (pp. 1–40). SAGE.

Jewitt, C. & Oyama, R. (2000). Visual meaning: A social semiotic approach. In Leeuwen, T. V., & Jewitt, C. (Eds.) *The Handbook of Visual Analysis*. Sage Publications Ltd. (pp. 134-156).

Lincoln, E. G., & Guba, Y. S. (1985). Chapter 11: Establishing trustworthiness. *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.

Little, D. (2012) Philosophy of history. In Zalta, E. N. (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. http://tinyurl.com/LittlePhilHistory

Okasha, S. (2002). *Philosophy of science: A very short introduction*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Found here: http://tinyurl.com/n9n8okv

Sapsford, R. J. (2007). *Survey research*. London: Sage Publications Ltd. At UT Libraries: http://tinyurl.com/8dooprc

Webster, M., & Sell, J. (2014). *Laboratory experiments in the social sciences* (2nd edition.). Academic Press. Found here: http://tinyurl.com/lrxbgal

Vora, N., & Boellstorff, T. (2012). Anatomy of an article: The peer-review process as method. *American Anthropologist, 114*(4), 578–583. doi:10.1111/j.1548-1433.2012.01490.x

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 more information: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

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.

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.   Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 am to 6 pm, so plan accordingly.

Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days p rior to the date of observance of a religious holy day.   If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Emergency Evacuation

Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy.   Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building. **Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.** In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire

Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050. For more information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures, visit www.utexas.edu/emergency.