I. Official Course Description
An overview of the nature and purposes of research, and common methods and methodologies in information studies.

II. General Objectives
Pursuing a Ph.D. is a commitment to a research career. The Research Enterprise will introduce students to the diverse interdisciplinary landscape of research methods and theories, and prepare students for careers in research, including seeking jobs, seeking funding, and building a research program. The course will also introduce students to the research areas and approaches of faculty and fellow Ph.D. students within the School of Information at the University of Texas at Austin.

III. Specific Learning Objectives
By the end of this course, you will:

- Gain a broad sense of the research methods and theories within the interdisciplinary field of Information Science.

- Build competency in accessing and applying prior scholarship, including 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.

- Develop a research proposal for conducting original research that can help you both to learn how to seek funding and learn appropriate research design.

IV. Course Schedule

**This syllabus represents my current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week Date</th>
<th>Topic/Debate</th>
<th>Readings – to be completed before class</th>
<th>Assignment(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 8/24</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Fall 2015 Doctoral Program Handbook; UConn; Kallestinova, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2 8/31</td>
<td><strong>The Information Field</strong></td>
<td>Burnett &amp; Bonnici, 2013; Dillon, 2012; Olson &amp; Grudin, 2009; Wiggins &amp; Sawyer 2012; Zhang, Yan, &amp; Hassman, 2013</td>
<td>Faculty Interests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3 9/7</td>
<td>Research Essentials; Research Ethics; Human Subjects Protection</td>
<td>DePoy &amp; Gitlin, 2016 (Ch. 1-3); UT Austin IRB &amp; Financial Conflict of Interest Training*</td>
<td>UT IRB/FCOI training certificates due</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 4 9/14</td>
<td>Knowledge/Epistemology</td>
<td>Bates, 1999; Becker &amp; Niehaves, 2007; Burke, 2007; Hjorland, 1998; DePoy &amp; Gitlin, 2016 (Ch. 4)</td>
<td>Grant Solicitation</td>
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<td>Week 5 9/21</td>
<td>Evaluating Research; Theory in Research</td>
<td>Frodeman &amp; Briggle, 2012; Rothenberg, 2010; NSF &amp; NIH Peer Review Guidelines**; DePoy &amp; Gitlin, 2016 (Ch. 7)</td>
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<td>Week 6 9/28</td>
<td>Reviewing the Literature</td>
<td>Baumeister, 2012; Becker, 2008; Denney &amp; Tewksbury, 2013; Randolph, 2009; Webster &amp; Watson, 2002</td>
<td>Motivation for the Research</td>
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<td>Week 7 10/5</td>
<td>Research Questions and Hypotheses</td>
<td>Black, 2002; Flick, 2007; Martin &amp; Bridgmon, 2012; Wildemuth, 2009a, 2009b</td>
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<td>Week 8 10/12</td>
<td>Qualitative Research</td>
<td>Braun &amp; Clarke, 2006; Kazmer &amp; Xie, 2008; Hess, 2001; Yin, 2010, 2013</td>
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<td>Week 9 10/19</td>
<td>Quantitative Research</td>
<td>Barnes &amp; Lewin, 2004; Bechhofer &amp; Paterson, 2000; Bradburn, Sudman, &amp; Wansink, 2004; Guthrie, 2010; Thelwall, 2009</td>
<td>Literature Review</td>
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<td>Week 10 10/26</td>
<td>Humanistic Research</td>
<td>Hoffman &amp; Waisanen, 2015; Parikka, 2012; Porra, Hirschheim, &amp; Parks, 2014; Ritchie, 2014; Rockwell, 2012</td>
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V. Course Requirements

1. Class attendance and participation policy

   (a) Because the vast majority of the learning in this class will occur within the classroom, you are required to attend class regularly. Absences will only be excused in situations following university policy (illness, religious holy days, participation in University activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling absences beyond your control) with proper documentation and timely notification (prior to class for non-emergencies). Excessive tardiness may be considered as an unexcused absence except in situations following university policy.

   (b) Class participation is a critical element of this course. The effectiveness of the course will be significantly impacted by the quality of your participation. Class participation is not merely attendance, but rather factors in your overall contributions to the collaborative learning environment, based on both the quantity and quality of your interactions in all aspects of the course. Discussion of class participation with the instructor is encouraged in order to ensure that you are making the most of the classroom experience and the accompanying opportunities for learning. You are expected to participate in all aspects of class
discussion. You should come to class prepared to discuss the required readings, as well as your perspectives on these readings. You should strive for balance in your contributions, and your participation will not be based on who speaks the loudest or the longest, but on consistent participation of significant quantity and, most importantly, quality.

(c) Your attendance and class participation grade will be calculated by multiplying the numerical assessment of your class participation by the percentage of classes that you attend (with exceptions made for documented, university-recognized absences as noted above). Regular attendance and active participation in each class session are critical for receiving a good grade.

(d) Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior 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, I will give you an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

2. Course Readings/Materials

(a) All course readings are available on the course Canvas site OR freely available on the Internet – see URLs listed in the Course Schedule above

(b) Be sure to complete all readings before coming to class

3. Use of Canvas in class

To supplement our in-class discussions we will use Canvas to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post questions and grades, and to submit assignments. You can find Canvas support at the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 am to 6 pm, so please plan accordingly.

4. Faculty Interests

Investigate five faculty members’ areas of interest, experience, and typical methodological choices. This will help you when it is time to choose your committee. Share summaries with the class by posting to Canvas (approximately 1 page per faculty member) and presenting orally in class.
5. Senior Peers' Wisdom

Interview any three doctoral students in cohorts preceding yours about the courses that they have taken while in the doctoral program, suggestions for success, and other wisdom. Share summaries with the class by posting to Canvas (approximately 2 pages per student) and presenting orally in class.

6. Mock Research Proposal

Throughout the semester, you will develop a mock research proposal tailored to a real funding solicitation.

(a) Funding Solicitation: What funding solicitation will you pursue and how?
In consultation with the instructor, you will select an active solicitation from a funding agency such as NSF, NIH, NEH, or IMLS. You will propose a project to address that solicitation. In addition to the link to the solicitation, make sure to answer the following questions (1-2 pages total):

i) How did you find this solicitation and why is it relevant to your planned research?

ii) What problem do you seek to address?

iii) How will you identify and analyze prior research on this topic (or closely related)?

iv) What research question(s) do you seek to answer through this research?

v) What research method(s) will you propose to conduct this research, and how will you employ them?

(b) Motivation for the Research: Why is it important and worthy of funding and (eventually) publication?
Provide a motivation for the research. Make sure to ground your motivation in helping to solve a significant problem. Your motivation should be approximately 3 pages in length.

(c) Literature Review: What has been done on your topic to date, and what gaps exist?
Provide an overview of the research to date. Make sure not only to review various pieces of literature but also to weave the individual pieces into a coherent and compelling picture of the literature. Focus not only on what has been done but also what has not. The literature review should culminate in a set of research questions that you seek to address in your research, based on gaps in the literature to date. Your literature review should be approximately 6 pages in length, and should be presented after the section on Motivation for the Research.

(d) Final Research Proposal: What methods will you use to conduct your research, and how will you use them?

List and introduce the methods that you will employ in your research project, providing a brief overview of their history and prior use. Explain how you will actually employ these methods. Your description of your methods should be clear enough that another researcher with similar training could effectively carry out the research based on your write-up. The Methods section should be approximately 6 pages in length (the overall proposal should be approximately 15 pages in length).

(e) Research Proposal Presentation: How will you pitch your research idea to potential funders, employers, etc.?

Present your research idea to a group of prospective funders. Make sure to motivate your research, explain how it builds on work done to date, and exactly how you will conduct the research. Your research proposal presentation should last about 20 minutes, with 20 minutes for questions and discussion afterwards.

7. Late Assignment Policy

All assignments are due by the start of class for that week. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas. Late assignments will only be excused in situations following university policy (illness, religious holy days, etc.) with proper documentation and timely notification (prior to the deadline for non-emergencies). In all other cases, assignments received after the deadline will be penalized 10% per 24-hour period (e.g., if you are five days late, even an otherwise perfect assignment will only receive half-credit; if you are ten days late, your assignment will not be graded and will not receive any credit).

VI. Grading Procedures

Grades will be based on:
1. Attendance and Participation (30%)
2. Mock Research Proposal (50%)
a. Selection of Funding Solicitation (5%)
b. Motivation for the Research (10%)
c. Literature Review (15%)
d. Final Research Proposal (15%)
e. Proposal Presentation (5%)

3. Additional Projects (20%)
   a. Faculty Interests (10%)
   b. Senior Peers' Wisdom (10%)

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

VII. Academic Integrity

University of Texas Honor Code: “The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.” Students in this course must follow the University of Texas Honor Code, which prohibits cheating, plagiarizing, submitting the same written assignment for two courses without authorization, and unauthorized collaboration/collusion. Suspected academic dishonesty will be reported and handled according to University policy and procedures. For a detailed description of the University definition of academic dishonesty, visit: [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_whatis.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_whatis.php).

Students are responsible for applying the academic integrity standards to this course. It is essential students know the consequences of cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty. For specific information on these consequences, visit: [http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/](http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/)

VIII. Other University Notices and Policies

Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students

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://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-m/](http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-m/)

Documented Disability Statement

Any student with a documented disability who requires academic accommodations should contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at (512)-(471)-6259 (voice) or (512)-410-
6644 (videophone). Faculty is not required to provide accommodations without an official accommodation letter from SSD.

- Please notify me as quickly as possible if the material being presented in class is not accessible (e.g., instructional videos need captioning, course packets are not readable for proper alternative text conversion, etc.).

- Contact Services for Students with Disabilities at (512)-471-6259 (voice) or (512)-410-6644 (videophone). or reference SSD’s website for more disability-related information: http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/

**Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)**

If you are worried about someone who is acting differently, you may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone your concerns about another individual’s behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal.

**Emergency Evacuation Policy**

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform me in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow my instructions or those of class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless you’re given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.