INF391D.10 Survey of Information Studies
School of Information, UT-Austin
Fall 2015

Class time: Tuesdays, 3:00-6:00PM
Instructor: Yan Zhang
Email: yanz@ischool.utexas.edu
Phone: 512-471-9448
Office: 5.434
Classroom: UTA5.428
Office hrs: Tuesdays, Noon-2:00PM; By appointment other times

Course Description
An overview of the major ideas, concepts, and theories of Information Studies. Prerequisite: Admission to the doctoral program; consent of the graduate advisor.

Learning Objectives
- Appreciate Information Studies as an intellectual area and a social phenomenon; become familiar with a broad range of established and emerging areas of research in Information Studies.
- Understand the role of models, theories, and frameworks in scholarly research and in Information Studies in particular
- Understand the role and importance of well-defined research questions and objectives
- Develop broad familiarity with the broad range of research methods used in Information Studies
- Learn to read and analyze academic research articles, including those outside one's area of interest
- Demonstrate practical skills in investigating a new topic in Information Studies and managing the information resources acquired in that investigation
- Being able to write substantial literature reviews that summarize and synthesize published research in Information Studies

Course Structure
This is a doctoral seminar. As such class sessions will primarily consist of group discussions. These discussions will help us, as a group, to understand and analyze an article both for its empirical and theoretical content and as a piece of research.

Required Text
The majority of the readings will be academic articles available as PDFs. There is just one book needed for the course, and it is one that will be useful to you throughout your PhD.


Pan, M. L. (2008). Preparing Literature Reviews: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (3rd edition). Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing. [Note: the 4th edition is out, but is much more expensive than the 3rd edition. I think the 3rd edition is sufficient for this class, based on my reading of the comments on Amazon as well as a book review about the 3rd edition this book. It will certainly be fine if you want to get the most recent edition]

Disability Accommodations
Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at
Statement on Academic Honesty
This course and your PhD study is about becoming an independent scholar. You must familiarize yourself with appropriate academic conduct and honesty by reading this guide: UT Austin Academic Integrity (http://www.utexas.edu/cola/cwgs/_files/pdf-4/ai2012.pdf)

Other UTexas Academic Honesty Resources:
1. Definitions of plagiarism and University procedures (http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_plagiarism.php)
2. Plagiarism tutorial (http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/)

Assignments and Grading
Weekly Reading Analysis (45%)
You will prepare a 1-2 page reading analysis of two of the assigned research paper readings for that week’s research area. The analysis can be structured using the following form:

1. Title of the article:
2. Theoretical framework (to understand the role of theories and models in research papers):
3. Research Qs:
4. I am studying [topic]: because I want to know [an indirect question that indicates what you do not know or understand about your topic]: in order to help their readers [so what?]
5. In what way is this paper interesting, in the specific sense used by Davis (1971)? If it is not, why not? (a paragraph)
6. A paragraph or two reaction to the paper. You may include aspects that you’d like to discuss.

The analyses are due at 9:00AM Monday morning, the day before class, so that I can read and grade them prior to class.

Literature Review (30%)
The ability to write a good literature review is critical for success in the doctoral program and for your future career as a scholar. Many course assignments, most conference and journal articles, and certainly your dissertation will require you to analyze, synthesize, and critique the current status of a body of literature. More importantly, conducting good literature reviews can help you have a solid understanding of a topic area, including what’s been done before, which approaches and methods have led to promising – or not so promising – paths of investigation, and where there are gaps in the literature that suggest useful areas for new research.

Writing a good literature review is much more than simply summarizing a handful of related papers. A useful literature review will convey an understanding of the breadth and depth of published work in a specific area, give the reader a good sense of the prominent theories, methods, systems, controversies, etc. that exist in the area – as well as the important authors and seminal publications – and show the reader where there are gaps in the literature that might suggest where more research is needed. Writing a literature review that meets these criteria is challenging and practice definitely helps. This assignment is intended to help you gain more experience with the process.
The deliverable for this assignment is a written literature review on a topic of your interest. The length and details of the submission may vary depending on the topic selected, but generally I expect the final product to be a 3-4 page long (1500-2500 words) and discuss at least 15-20 references (some perhaps very briefly, others more thoroughly). You are free to use any established reference style (e.g., APA, MLA, Chicago) in this assignment. You are recommended to use a reference management tool (e.g., EndNote, Zotero, Mendeley) to help you organize the references.

A draft on this assignment, which will be assigned 10 of your final course grade, is due electronically, submitted to my email by 9:00AM on November 17th. I will return your draft with comments by the beginning of class on November 24th. The final version of the assignment will be assigned 20% of our final course grade, is due electronically, submitted to my email by 9:00AM on our last class day, December 1st.

The grade for your final deliverable of this assignment will be based on the following rubric:

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<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Observed qualities</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excellent (A/A-)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction to topic area</td>
<td>Clear introduction to topic area; effective orientation for body of review provided</td>
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<tr>
<td>Body of review</td>
<td>Critical synthesis present; consistent and logical transitions; cohesive narrative going from general to specific</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coverage</td>
<td>Thorough, consistent coverage of topic area; in-depth discussion where appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Solid, logical summary of review; insights and suggestions follow from body of review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarity of writing</td>
<td>Clearly written, coherent argument; structural variety; reads as a connected, informative narrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Citations/References</td>
<td>All references match citations; proper citation and reference style followed throughout</td>
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The overall grading for this class is broken down as following: Participation in class discussions (15%), weekly reading analysis (there will be 9 analyses in total, 45%), literature review (30%), and the presentation of the literature review (10%).

The assignments will only be accepted late if the instructor grants permission, at least 24 hours before the due date, for the students to turn the assignment in late, on an agreed-upon date. Except in extreme circumstances, this assignment will be docked several points for each day it is late. I will use the following schedule as the basis for calculating grades: A = 94-100, A- = 90-93, B+ = 87-89, B = 84-86, B- = 80-83, C+ = 77-79, C = 74-76, C- = 70-73, D = 60-69, F <60.

Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 – Sep. 1, 2015</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. iSchool faculty (<a href="https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/faculty_directory">https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/faculty_directory</a>) and doctoral students (<a href="https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/phd-students">https://www.ischool.utexas.edu/people/phd-students</a>)</td>
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<th>Week 2 – Sep. 8, 2015</th>
<th>Discussion about research</th>
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<tr>
<td>Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Booth et al. Section III (Chapters 7-11) “Making a claim and supporting it”</td>
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<td>2. Davis (1971) “That’s interesting”</td>
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<td>4. Booth et al. Section I (Chapter 1-2) “Research, Researchers, and Readers”</td>
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<th>Week 3 – Sep. 15, 2015</th>
<th>Information Organization</th>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Mai (2010) Classification in a social world</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Booth et al. Section II, Chapter 3-4 (Topics, Questions, and Problem)</td>
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<th>Week 4 – Sep. 22, 2015</th>
<th>Information Behavior</th>
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<td>Readings:</td>
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<th>Week 5 – Sep. 29, 2015</th>
<th>Information Retrieval</th>
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Readings:
3. SWIRL 2012 Report (Lorne)

Week 6 – Oct. 6, 2015  Literature Review

Readings:
1. Booth et al. Section II, Chapter 5-6 (Sources and Engaging Sources)
2. Pan. Evaluating and interpreting research literature; Taking notes and avoiding unintentional plagiarism; Preparing a topic outline for the first draft; Writing the first draft: basic principles, optional techniques, statistical issues in qualitative reviews; Building tables to summarize literature; Revising and refining the first draft

Week 7 – Oct. 13, 2015  Information Institutions/Scholarly Communication

Readings:
5. Booth et al. Section IV, Chapter 1 (Introductions and Conclusions)

Week 8 – Oct. 20, 2015  Socio-Technical Systems/Social Informatics & Literature Review

Readings:

Week 9 – Oct. 27, 2015  Human Computer Interaction

Readings:

Review article (optional):

5. Booth et al. Section IV, Chapter 12-14 (Planning, Drafting, and Revising)

Week 10 – Nov. 3, 2015 CSCW-Computer Supported Cooperative Work

Readings:

Week 11 – Nov. 10, 2015 [ASIST]

Week 12 – Nov. 17, 2015 Archive

Readings:

Week 13 – Nov. 24, 2015 Information Systems

Readings:


5. Booth et al. Section IV, Chapter 15 (Communicating Evidence Visually), Chapter 17 (Revising Style)

**Week 14 – Dec. 1, 2015** Final Presentation (literature reviews)