

LIS 608: Research Methods in Library & Information Science

Spring 2016, January 13-May 6

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INTRODUCTION

LIS 608, Research Methodology in LIS, focuses on common social science techniques, such as surveys and experiments, which lend themselves to quantitative analysis. Also included are lectures on qualitative methods, such as participant observation and historical research, and hybrid methods like focus groups, content analysis, and evaluation research. Studies of information usage are used as the main examples, and methods peculiar to information science, such as bibliometrics, are also examined.

Student learning outcomes—upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- Evaluate and apply qualitative and quantitative research methods and theories in library and information science.
- Address the ethical dimensions associated with approaches to research.
- Interpret and evaluate existing research.
- Apply research to the analysis of professional concerns.
- Describe how empirical research advances the knowledge base and practice of library and information science.
- Communicate effectively in writing.
- Think critically about research questions.

One text is required for the course:

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Other required readings can be found in academic libraries or through the UK library web site. Some are freely available on the Internet, and links are provided below for most of those. As this is a research course, you are expected to find the rest!

Structure of the course: The class weeks will run Wednesday to Tuesday. Almost every week you will do some kind of assignment, whether it is an article review, an application of a method, or work toward your final project. You are expected to do all assigned readings and to view all lecture materials, whether it is delivered as video or notes. Everything will be held in Canvas. We will have a few guest lecturers this semester, and these may be held live with the option to attend synchronously (any synchronous meeting will be recorded and stored in Canvas).

This year the course is going to be designed around upcoming conferences, and by the end of the semester you will have produced a professional research poster that you can present. Specifically, we will follow the guidelines for the upcoming IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) conference. Submitting a proposal is not a requirement of the course, nor is having a topic by the first week. There will be a poster-proposal writing workshop the second week of the course.

I am going to try to run this class like a workshop as much as possible so that you have opportunities to share your ideas and get feedback from one another and me as you work on your projects.

Contact Information: I am most accessible through email: melissa.adler@uky.edu. As a general rule, I will respond to course-related email correspondence within 24 hours. Please include the course number in brackets [608] in the subject line for all messages. I am happy to meet face to face or via technology with students, but you should set up the appointment in advance via email.

Please note that class communication is done via your official UK email address. You must check this frequently.

Technological requirements:

Guides to using Canvas are available: <https://guides.instructure.com/m/4212>

All students should have access to a computer with a secure Internet connection, Adobe Acrobat Reader, and word processing software that allows them to save files as .DOCX, preferably, but also .doc, .odt, or .rtf files. I cannot view .pages files, so Mac users will need to save their assignments in a different format. Microsoft Office and other software is available from <https://download.uky.edu/>. For more on technical requirements, visit the Distance Learning web site's Technical Requirements and Recommendations. Please let me know when you are having technical issues first. For more assistance, contact the following:

Information Technology Customer Service Center (UKIT): 859-257-1300

Help Desk: 218-HELP (4357)

Distance Learning Programs Office: 257-3377

Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning: 257-8272

FERPA and Privacy: As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without the your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to

privacy at <http://www.uky.edu/registrar/FERPA-privacy>.

Academic Accommodations: If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (725 Rose Street, Multidisciplinary Science Building, Suite 407, 257-2754, susan.fogg@uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities. We can then collaborate on the best solution. More information is available at the Disability Resource Center web site: <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/DisabilityResourceCenter/current.html>

Academic Integrity, Cheating and Plagiarism: You are expected to submit your own original work for all assignments in this course. See the home page for the Office of Academic Ombud Services (<http://www.uky.edu/Ombud>) for a definition of plagiarism, how to avoid plagiarism and UK's new academic offense policy. Please refer to Student Rights and Responsibilities, Part II, Section 6.3 (<http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/part2.html>) for UK's policy on academic integrity.

Classroom Behavior, Decorum and Civility: Please be respectful to others in the class and engage in civil discourse when we discuss topics that have a diversity of perspectives. Please help me maintain the most courteous environment by using a little peer pressure if necessary.

General Course Policies: Policies concerning academic integrity, excused absences and academic accommodations due to disability are available online at: <https://ci.uky.edu/sis/sites/default/files/policies.pdf>

Integration of the syllabus with the themes of diversity, assessment, and technology: All UK professional education programs address and affirm the value of diversity in education, the use of technology to support all aspects of instructional programming, and the importance of attaining high levels of skill in assessing the outcomes of instruction. This course provides students an opportunity to demonstrate attention to these themes and reflect on the mechanisms that this course has provided to demonstrate improved skills in these areas.

Military Members and Veterans

We recognize the complexities of being a member of the military community and also a student. If you are a member of the military or a military veteran or dependent, please inform your instructor if you are in need of special accommodations. Drill schedules, calls to active duty, mandatory training exercises, complications with GI Bill disbursement, and other unforeseen military and veteran related developments can complicate your academic life. If you are aware of a complication, we will work

with you and put you in contact with university staff members who are trained to assist you. Please contact the Coordinator of the University of Kentucky Veterans Resource Center at (859) 257-1148 for additional assistance. Visit <http://www.uky.edu/veterans> for more available resources.

GRADING

Grading for the entire course will be based on:

Article review/discussion leader	10
Literature review	30
Final proposal	20
Poster presentation	20
Participation	20

Grading Scale:

[90% - 100%] = **A (Exceptional Achievement)**

[80% - 89%] = **B (High Achievement)**

[70% - 79%] = **C (Average Achievement)**

[0% - 69%] = **F (Failing)**

ASSIGNMENTS

As a rule, I am happy to look at drafts before you turn in a finished assignment, as long as you give me enough time (I suggest 4 days, minimum) to review it and provide feedback in time for you to incorporate that feedback.

Assignments are always due at 11:59 pm on the day indicated.

ARTICLE REVIEW/DISCUSSION LEADER (10 points)

You will each select one of the starred articles in the course schedule to review, and then you will lead a discussion on that topic for the week.

- You will post a 500-700 word review of the article to the discussion board by Friday of that week at 11:59 pm. This gives your classmates the weekend and Monday and Tuesday to respond.
- Provide at least two questions for discussion.
- Your classmates will respond to your post, and you will direct the ongoing discussion throughout the rest of the week (respond at least three times).

The issues covered by the reviews will vary, according to topic, method, and your own lens through which you choose to analyze the article, but some things to consider are the following (this is not an exhaustive list). Try to incorporate as many of these items as are appropriate.

- What is/are the central research question(s)?
- What research method has been used? Is the method appropriate?
- What is the argument/thesis of the article?
- Is there a theoretical component?
- What is the intended audience?
- How does it inform library/knowledge work practice or research?
- Is something being measured? If so, how? What is the unit of measurement?
- Does the author explain the methodology effectively?
- What type of sample is used, and how are participants selected?
- How are data collected? How are they analyzed?
- Are there limitations of the research design? Unanswered questions? Holes?
- What are the strengths of the paper?
- What might be some further research questions that could spring from this article?
- Look up the author's bio. What credentials or interests does the author(s) have? Might the author have biases?

*Some of you will report on an article that discusses a method, theory, or issue, rather than serve as a research article. If that is the case, provide a review that presents the central argument of the piece, the essential points that readers should take from the article, an

extended **critical analysis** of a specific point, and questions for discussion. Some of the above items will be relevant, too, including the strengths and limitations of the paper, author's background, how it informs LIS practice and research, intended audience, and so on.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL, 20 points total

The major assignment for this class is a research proposal, in tandem with the research poster. We will do this in stages, beginning with an identification of your topic and research question(s).

1) Research topic and research questions (Due February 2, 5 points)

2) Final proposal (Due May 1, 15 points)

Research Topic: The topic is up to you, but it should be original and not based on earlier work for which you have received credit. The topic may be academic or practice-based. It should contribute something new to the existing literature. Case studies on individual libraries are acceptable if they provide compelling evidence for adopting or changing library policies and/or practices. Deposit a 200 word summary of your topic in Canvas by the due date. I will assume that you have not arrived at precise questions at this point. I want to know that you have given this some serious thought, so provide a statement of the purpose, possible methods, and possible questions.

Final Research Proposal: Your research proposal should be 8-10 pages (**firm limit**), double spaced, plus references. You will be expected to complete a small pilot study or provide early findings. The paper will be a professional document and one that could potentially be used as part of a grant proposal or a workplace or academic research proposal.

The proposal should include four sections: 1) Introduction, 2) Design, 3) Preliminary findings, 4) Conclusion/discussion.

It should include the following components:

Introduction

- Statement of the topic, phrased as a research question and/or hypothesis.
- Statement of purpose and expected impact.
- Abbreviated literature review (This should not be imported from your larger literature review, but rather, it should be

a overview of the existing literature and why your study is needed – what gap is it filling?)

Design

- Definitions of the important concepts in your study.
- Explanation of theory or model your study builds from, if applicable.
- Thorough explanation of the proposed methods of investigation and why they are appropriate. Include information about the research setting and/or population and how these will be selected. Do you have access to this site and population? If not, how will you gain access? How will you collect data? How will you analyze the data?
- Account of potential ethical issues (if any) and how you will address them.
- Timeline.
- Limitations of the study.

Preliminary findings

- Results of a pilot study or early findings.

Conclusion/discussion

- Implications of predicted findings.
- Reiteration of purpose and impact.

The proposal should be formatted according to an appropriate citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago). I don't have a preference. Just be consistent!

LITERATURE REVIEW/BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY (Due in installments, 30 points total)

You will do a thorough review of the literature that is relevant to your research topic. You will want to find theories and/or models that can inform your study, as well. Conducting this review will help you to develop and focus your research questions. As you are writing, be sure to bring the literature into conversation around your questions. Some topics have been widely studied, but there may be a dearth of information on other topics. Where there is a lack of literature, you may find that other disciplines (education, sociology, etc.) have bodies of literature related to the topic. Where there is an abundance of literature, be sure to ask yourself whether your study contributes something new.

You will complete this assignment in four installments so that you can focus on the process of conducting a thorough review of the literature relevant to your research question(s). This should all evolve as you read and process existing studies, so that by the end of it, you are able to clearly articulate your own questions and bring your study into dialogue with the literature.

- 1) First search library databases (Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts (LISTA), Library Literature & Information Science Full Text) and the UK library catalog. Try Google Scholar and Google Books, as well. Provide a list of 15-20 potentially relevant **scholarly, peer reviewed** articles, books, and book chapters. Obtain these items and save electronic files to a folder. (Some may have to be retrieved by interlibrary loan, so don't leave this until the last minute.) Document your search process and how you found each resource (further instructions will be provided). **Due February 16. 5 points.**
- 2) Second, you will determine which of those articles are highly relevant to your topic (it may be the case that the entire paper/book is relevant or that only a portion of the findings is significant. It may be methodologically or theoretically relevant, too.) Complete a literature review matrix (see NCSU guide) or map (Creswell pp. 36-38) for those items that you intend to use for the study. **Due March 8. 10 points.**
- 3) Of those that you have selected, consult the works cited, and locate those that seem relevant to your study. Add these to your matrix/map. There should now be a minimum of 15 citations in your matrix/map. **Due March 22. 5 points.**
- 4) Write an essay that brings all of the relevant articles into dialogue around your research question(s). Your final essay must discuss **at least 15** scholarly, peer-reviewed articles or books. You may also include, in addition to those 15 articles from the internet, popular resources, or trade/practice journal articles. The essay will be **8-10 double-spaced pages, not including references. Due April 5. 10 points.**

Given the time constraints, this cannot be an exhaustive review, but if done with careful attention and focus, you should become very familiar with the literature related to your questions. Your final essay should include an introduction, body, and discussion/conclusion that brings it all together.

The introduction will state the purpose of the study and provide an explanation of the topic. The body will provide an explanation of how each of the articles speaks to your questions. This is NOT an annotated bibliography, but rather, it should be written in clear and elegant prose. There should be a presentation of each article's methods and findings and limitations as they relate to your topic. Your account of each article will vary in terms of detail, depending on their comparative importance in the literature. You will want to draw attention to any author or article that appears to have had significant impact in the area. You may group articles according to themes, approaches, or findings.

Please do not transcribe the entire title in the essay, but cite according to a citation style. For example:
Burns (2012) has indicated that....

In their estimation, the most significant factor is... (Asher, Duke & Wilson, 2013).

Avoid using a lot of direct quotations for this assignment. Use them sparingly, only when necessary.

Avoid the use of personal pronouns for this assignment, and write in an active voice.

POSTER PRESENTATION (20 points), due April 19

You will create a high quality research poster suitable for a conference presentation in digital form. We will be roughly following IFLA's poster proposal guidelines. <http://2016.ifla.org/programme/poster-sessions/call-for-posters> (More information to follow. There will be a poster proposal writing and poster design workshop the second week of class in AdobeConnect.)

The poster must include the following:

- Title
- Research question(s)
- Summary of the project/brief abstract
- Description of methods
- Early findings or the results of a pilot study
- Figures and/or tables.
- Citations, if needed

These will be posted in the course space so that you all share your projects and provide feedback for one another. The last week is reserved for viewing posters and finishing your final research proposals.

PARTICIPATION (20 points)

Your participation grade will be based on how engaged you are within the discussion boards. My hope is that we have a vibrant, ongoing conversation. Each week you are required to respond to each discussion leader's question. Some weeks there will be no discussion leader, and others there are two. Most weeks I will post at least one question, as well. These will be posted by Wednesday. **It is your responsibility to monitor the boards every week and participate in every discussion topic with at least 200 words each.** I will post three discussion grades during the semester (10 points each).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Dates to remember:

ASAP (by January 17): Sign up for the article you want to review

January 20, Poster workshop, 11:00 am EST in AdobeConnect (Attend synchronously, if possible. The session will be recorded.)

February 2, Research topic due

February 16, Literature review, part 1

March 8, Literature review, part 2

March 22, Literature review, part 3

April 5, Complete literature review

April 19, Poster due

May 1, Research proposal due

All readings are required, unless explicitly stated otherwise below. An asterisk simply means that the article is one that will have a discussion leader.

<p>Week 1 January 13</p> <p>Sign up for article review</p>	<p>Intro to research</p>	<p>Creswell, Chapter 1</p> <p>Turabian, K. L. (2009). A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th ed., Chapter 1, pp. 5-11. Available via Google Books, http://books.google.com/books?id=i6aXJLeZ2OMC&printsec=frontcover#v=onepage&q&f=false</p> <p>Furner, J. "Fundamental Research Questions in Information Science," ASIS&T 2011: 74th Annual Meeting of the American Society for Information Science and Technology. New Orleans, LA, October 9-12, 2011. Available: http://works.bepress.com/furner/15</p> <p>Of the four resources/papers below, take a look at those that are most relevant to your interests.</p> <p>Todd, R. (2008) Evidence-based manifesto for school librarians, SLJ, http://www.slj.com/2008/04/librarians/the-evidence-based-manifesto-for-school-librarians/#</p> <p>Assessment at U of Illinois (Take a look at the kinds of questions they are asking): http://www.library.illinois.edu/assessment/</p> <p>Public library research projects (Take a look at a few of these to get a glimpse of public library research): http://webjunction.org/explore-topics/needs-assessment/documents.html</p> <p>Sawyer, Steve, Social Informatics: Overview, Principles, and Opportunities, http://asis.org/Bulletin/jun-05/sawyer.html</p>
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<p>Week 2 January 20</p>	<p>Theory</p>	<p>Creswell, Chapter 3</p> <p>*Samuel E. Trosow, "Standpoint Epistemology as an Alternative Methodology for Library and Information Science," <i>The Library Quarterly</i>, Vol. 71, No. 3 (Jul., 2001), pp. 360-382.</p> <p>*Thompson, K. M. (2009). Remembering Elfreda Chatman: A champion of theory development in library and information science education. <i>Journal of Education for Library and Information Science</i>, 119-126.</p> <p>*Robson, A., & Robinson, L. (2013). Building on models of information behaviour: linking information seeking and communication. <i>Journal of documentation</i>, 69(2), 169-193.</p> <p>Poster workshop, January 20, 11:00 am EST, AdobeConnect</p>
<p>Week 3 January 27</p> <p>Research topic due February 2</p>	<p>Literature review; Purpose and design</p>	<p>Creswell, Chapter 2, 5, 6</p> <p>UNC Literature review handouts, http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/literature-reviews/</p> <p>*Asher, Duke, and Wilson (2013) Paths of Discovery: Comparing the Search Effectiveness of EBSCO Discovery Service, Summon, Google Scholar, and Conventional Library Resources, <i>College & Research Libraries</i> 74(5): 464-488 http://crl.acrl.org/content/74/5/464.full.pdf+html</p> <p>NC State University Writing and Speaking Tutorial Service Tutors "Writing A Literature Review and Using a Synthesis Matrix" http://writingcenter.fiu.edu/resources/synthesis-matrix-2.pdf</p>
<p>Week 4 February 3</p>	<p>Ethics</p>	<p>Creswell, Chapter 4</p> <p>*Harris, M. The psychology of torture: The Milgram experiments showed that anybody could be capable of torture when obeying an authority. Are they still valid? <i>aeon</i>, (Oct. 7, 2014) http://aeon.co/magazine/psychology/why-do-we-keep-repeating-the-milgram-experiments/</p> <p>*Smale, M. A (2010). "Demystifying the IRB: Human Subjects Research in Academic Libraries,"</p>

		<p>portal: <i>Libraries and the Academy</i>, 10(3): 309-321.</p> <p>Arthur, C. (2014) Facebook emotion study breached ethical guidelines, researchers say, <i>The Guardian</i>, June 30, 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2014/jun/30/facebook-emotion-study-breached-ethical-guidelines-researchers-say</p>
<p>Week 5 February 10</p> <p>Literature review, part 1 due February 16</p>	<p>Reliability and validity, Qualitative v. quantitative</p>	<p>Creswell, Chapter 7, 9</p> <p>Hernon, P., & Schwartz, C. (2009). Reliability and validity. <i>Library & Information Science Research</i>, 31(2), 73-74.</p> <p>Research methods knowledge base: Construct validity (read each of the sub-sections): http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/constval.php</p> <p>Qualitative measures (read each of the sub-sections): http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qual.php</p>
<p>Week 6 February 17</p>	<p>Data Collection: Participant observation, Ethnography</p>	<p>*Kawulich, Barbara B. "Participant observation as a data collection method." In <i>Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research</i>, vol. 6, no. 2. 2005.</p> <p>*Gatson, S. N. "The methods, politics, and ethics of representation in online ethnography." <i>The SAGE handbook of qualitative research</i> 4 (2011): 513-527.</p> <p>View Usability video (available in Canvas) Web Usability Study 2013, UK (available in Canvas)</p>
<p>Week 7 February 24</p>	<p>Data Collection</p>	<p>*McKechnie, Lynne. "Ethnographic observation of preschool children." <i>Library & Information Science Research</i> 22, no. 1 (2000): 61-76.</p> <p>*Caswell, Michelle. "Toward a survivor-centered approach to records documenting human rights abuse: lessons from community archives." <i>Archival Science</i> 14, no. 3-4 (2014): 307-322.</p> <p>Nemer D. and Freeman G., Empowering the Marginalized: Rethinking Selfies in the Slums of Brazil. <i>International Journal of Communication</i>. 9 (2015 May 15): 1832-1847.</p> <p>Guest lecture, David Nemer (tentative date)</p>

<p>Week 8 March 2</p> <p>Literature review, part 2 due March 8</p>	<p>Data Collection</p>	<p>*Spring, H., Doherty, P., Boyes, C., & Wilshaw, K. (2014). Research engagement in health librarianship: Outcomes of a focus group. <i>Library & Information Science Research</i>.</p> <p>*Gray, Mary L. <i>Out in the country: Youth, media, and queer visibility in rural America</i>. NYU Press, 2009, Chapter 2, pp. 35-60.</p> <p>*Lloyd, A., Kennan, M., Thompson, K. M., & Qayyum, A. (2013). Connecting with new information landscapes: information literacy practices of refugees. <i>Journal of Documentation</i>, 69(1), 121-144.</p>
<p>Week 9 March 9</p> <p>Literature review, part 3 due March 22</p>	<p>Data Collection</p>	<p>*Gabridge, T., Gaskell, M. and Stout, A. "Information Seeking through Students' Eyes: The MIT Photo Diary Study," <i>College and Research Libraries</i> 69 (2008): p. 510-523.</p> <p>*Becvar, K. & Srinivasan, R. "Indigenous Knowledge and Culturally Responsive Methods in Information Research," <i>The Library Quarterly</i>, Vol. 79, No. 4 (October 2009), pp. 421-441.</p> <p>(This week includes spring break and carries through until March 22)</p>
<p>Week 10 March 23</p>	<p>Data Analysis</p>	<p>Zhang, Y. and Wildemuth, B.M. "Qualitative analysis of content." <i>Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science</i> (2009): 308-319.</p> <p>*Charmaz, K. (2006) <i>Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis</i>, Sage, Chapters 1 and 3, pp. 1-12, 42-71.</p> <p>*Frohmann, Bernd. "Discourse analysis as a research method in library and information science." <i>Library & Information Science Research</i> 16, no. 2 (1994): 119-138.</p>
<p>Week 11 March 30</p> <p>Literature review, complete essay due April 5</p>	<p>Evaluation research, evidence-based practice</p>	<p>Research methods knowledge base: Evaluation research (read each of the subsections) http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/evaluation.php</p> <p>*Fisher, K. E., Durrance, J.C. and Hinton, M.B. "Information grounds and the use of need-based services by immigrants in Queens, New York: A context-based, outcome evaluation approach." <i>Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology</i> 55, no. 8 (2004): 754-766.</p> <p>Richey, Jennifer, and Maria Cahill. "School Librarians' Experiences with Evidence-Based</p>

		Library and Information Practice." <i>School Library Research</i> 17 (2014).
Week 12 April 6	Quantitative methods	Creswell Chapter 8 Joo, S., & Lee, J. Y. (2011). Measuring the usability of academic digital libraries: Instrument development and validation. <i>Electronic Library</i> , 29(4), 523-537. *Park, Minsoo, and Tae-seok Lee. "Understanding science and technology information users through transaction log analysis." <i>Library Hi Tech</i> 31, no. 1 (2013): 123-140. Guest lecture, Soohyung Joo
Week 13 April 13 Poster due, April 19	Statistical analysis, Bibliometrics Citation analysis	*Lariviere, V., et.al. Bibliometrics: Global gender disparities in science. <i>Nature News</i> (2013). http://www.nature.com/news/bibliometrics-global-gender-disparities-in-science-1.14321 *Cook, J. M. Library Credit Course and Student Success Rates: a longitudinal study. <i>College and Research Libraries</i> . http://crl.acrl.org/content/75/3/272.full.pdf
Week 14 April 20	Mixed methods	Creswell, Chapter 10 Skim parts of interest to you: Foster and Gibbons (2007) Studying students: the Undergraduate Research Project at the University of Rochester, ACRL http://www.ala.org/acrl/sites/ala.org.acrl/files/content/publications/booksanddigitalresources/digital/Foster-Gibbons_cmpd.pdf
Week 15 April 27 Final research proposal due May 1	Wrap-up	