LSC 745 Research Methods in Library and Information Science

Prerequisites: LSC551 Organization of Information 3 credit hours
Tuesday 6:50 – 9:20 pm, Marist 208

Instructor contact information: Joan Lussky, Ph.D.
Office location: Marist 243
Phone: 202/319-5855 (office)
E-mail: lussky@cua.edu
Office Hours: Wed. 2-4 and by appointment

Course Description:
Covers the analysis and evaluation of research studies in library and information science and the application of analytical and evaluative techniques. Surveys research processes, including problem definition, design, sampling, measurement, data collection and analysis, and the applications of research findings to solving practical problems of libraries and information centers. Includes research design and proposal writing. No previous statistical or research background required. Instructional method: lecture complemented by in-class group projects, homework, exams, and a final project.

READING MATERIAL

Required Text:

Worth consulting:

Other materials:
Additional readings may be assigned as the course progresses.

COURSE GOALS. This course will provide the student with:
- A solid introduction to the nature and paradigms of research as a type of scientific inquiry
- Ability to construct meaningful research questions and research hypotheses within library and information science
- Awareness and comprehension of a variety of qualitative and quantitative methodologies allowing for the selection of appropriate research design and data collection technique for any given research question
- Understanding of the process and iterative nature of research
- A basic understanding of descriptive and inferential statistics, and familiarity with a sampling of specific statistical methods for data analysis.
“Make mistakes. Get messy. Take chances.” Miss Frizzle’s motto.

Professional Standards Addressed in this course:
American Library Association [http://www.ala.org/ala/accreditationb/Draft_Core_Competencies_07_05.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/accreditationb/Draft_Core_Competencies_07_05.pdf)
- Understands the nature of research, research methods and research findings within the library and information fields and has an awareness of current literature in these and related areas.
- Is familiar with the fundamentals of research, survey and data collection designs of current or potential value to library and information entities.
- Has basic knowledge of the concepts and processes related to the assessment and evaluation of the specifications, economic impact and efficacy of technology-based products and services.

Special Library Association [http://www.sla.org/content/learn/comp2003/index.cfm](http://www.sla.org/content/learn/comp2003/index.cfm)
- Gathers the best available evidence to support decisions about the development of new service and products, the modification of current services or the elimination of services to continually improve the array of information services offered.
- Conducts market research of the information behaviors and problems of current and potential client groups to identify concepts for new or enhanced information solutions for these groups. Transforms these concepts into customized information products and services.
- Researches, analyzes and synthesizes information into accurate answers or actionable information for clients, and ensures that clients have the tools or capabilities to immediately apply these.
- Develops and applies appropriate metrics to continually measure the quality and value of information offerings, and to take appropriate action to ensure each offering’s relevance within the portfolio.
- Employs evidence-based management to demonstrate the value of and continually improve information sources and services.
- Assesses, selects and applies current and emerging information tools and creates information access and delivery solutions.

Medical Library Association [http://www.mlanet.org/education/platform/skills.html#6](http://www.mlanet.org/education/platform/skills.html#6)
- In order to conduct and interpret research, the health sciences librarian is called upon to apply knowledge, skills, and understanding of
  - theoretical bases of health sciences information, education, and clinical practice;
  - information structure, transfer, and processing;
  - analysis, evaluation, and application of research results;
  - methods for evaluation of system effectiveness and efficiency;
  - statistical theory; and
  - research methodologies.

Course Requirements
1.) Two Quizzes (each worth 5% of grade) and an exam (worth 10% of grade)

2.) Partial term project (worth 10% of grade)
Write a research proposal OR literature review on a topic relevant to research methods in LIS
Preliminary document: 4 pages.

3.) Homework assignments (worth 40% of grade)
Critique a published research paper
Development of a survey instrument
Applications of qualitative method
Applications and use of a quantitative method

4.) Full term project (worth 20% of grade)

5.) Class participation (every week) (worth 10% of grade)
EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Academic honesty:
Academic honesty is expected of all CUA students. Faculty are required to initiate the imposition of sanctions when they find violations of academic honesty, such as plagiarism, improper use of a student’s own work, cheating, and fabrication.

The following sanctions are presented in the University procedures related to Student Academic Dishonesty (from http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrityprocedures.cfm): “The presumed sanction for undergraduate students for academic dishonesty will be failure for the course. There may be circumstances, however, where, perhaps because of an undergraduate student’s past record, a more serious sanction, such as suspension or expulsion, would be appropriate. In the context of graduate studies, the expectations for academic honesty are greater, and therefore the presumed sanction for dishonesty is likely to be more severe, e.g., expulsion. ...In the more unusual case, mitigating circumstances may exist that would warrant a lesser sanction than the presumed sanction.”

Please review the complete texts of the University policy and procedures regarding Student Academic Dishonesty, including requirements for appeals, at http://policies.cua.edu/academicundergrad/integrity.cfm.

Other Policies or Expectations.

Email.
• Provide a meaningful subject to all your emails.
• Begin each subject line with: lsc745, or risk a delayed response or potentially no response.

Formatting of your assignments.
• For hard copy work securely fasten together any papers that are more than 1 page.
• Place your name on the first page.
• Submitted work must have a professional appearance and not be handwritten.

Participation & Conduct:
• Attendance is mandatory. Attendance is required, in keeping with university policy. Students may miss up to 3 classes without a penalty. Your participation grade will drop by 10 points for every absence after 3 missed classes.
• Late work. The instructor will not accept late work except by prior arrangement. If accepted, it will be graded at the end of the term.
• Makeup work. If a student has a legitimate reason, such as a family emergency, the instructor might allow a student to do makeup work. The amount and nature of the work is up to the instructor’s discretion. It will be graded at term’s end.
• Arrive on time. Chronic lateness can negatively affect class participation grades.
• Behave respectfully. Students are expected to behave respectfully while in class. Participation grades will reflect a student’s maturity level and professionalism, and whether the student actively participates in class discussions.
• No phone calls during class. Turn off or silence cell phones and pagers. Students leaving the room for calls are not allowed to return to that class session.
• No grade discussions in class. Instructor will not discuss grades in class. First consider why the instructor deducted points. If you still disagree, explain your disagreement in an e-mail to the instructor.

Syllabus:
The instructor reserves the right to make changes to this syllabus if circumstances warrant such change. All changes will be provided to students via BlackBoard.
“Make mistakes. Get messy. Take chances.” Miss Frizzle’s motto.

**Campus Resources for student support:**
- Academic Tutoring and Learning Assistance Service (ATLAS)
  - [http://counseling.cua.edu/atlas/](http://counseling.cua.edu/atlas/)
  - 101 O’Boyle Hall
  - Phone: (202) 319-5018

- CUA Counseling Center
  - [http://counseling.cua.edu/services/](http://counseling.cua.edu/services/)
  - 127 O’Boyle Hall
  - Phone: (202) 319-5765

- Mullen Library
  - [http://libraries.cua.edu/welcome.html](http://libraries.cua.edu/welcome.html)
  - Phone: (202) 319-5070

- Office of Career Services
  - They even offer help with interview preparation and mock interviews.
    - [http://careers.cua.edu/studalum/Servicesandassistance.cfm#mockinter](http://careers.cua.edu/studalum/Servicesandassistance.cfm#mockinter)

**Accommodations for students with disabilities:**
Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Please contact me as soon as possible, preferably within the first week of class. Also, please contact Disability Support Services (at 202 319-5211, room 207 Pryzbyla Center) to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. To read about the services and policies, please visit the website: [http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu](http://disabilitysupport.cua.edu).

**Assessment**
Grades for this course will be based upon the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homework assignments (4 graded @ 100 points each)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partial term project (100 points)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Term project: (200 points)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Quizzes: (2 @ 50 points each)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Exam (100 points)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Participation in class (100 points)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL (1000 points)</td>
<td>100%</td>
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**NOTE:** Late work will not be accepted with the exception of those cases noted above in the “Participation & conduct”.

**University grades:**
The University grading system is available at
- [http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii](http://policies.cua.edu/academicgrad//gradesfull.cfm#iii) for graduate students.
- Reports of grades in courses are available at the end of each term on [http://cardinalstation.cua.edu](http://cardinalstation.cua.edu).
**Course Schedule** - This calendar is subject to change dependent on class needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Class Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 28</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td>Developing a research study</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Selecting a research method</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>Survey research</td>
<td>Chapter 4 &amp; selections from Sudman and Bradburn</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sept 25</td>
<td>Data collection techniques</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
<td></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Oct 2</td>
<td>QUIZ #1 Data collection tech (cont.)</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Oct 9</td>
<td>NO CLASS “Administrative Monday”</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Writing Research papers &amp; Writing research proposals</td>
<td>Chapter 10 &amp; 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
<td>Experimental research</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Oct 30</td>
<td>Data analysis</td>
<td>Chapter 9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
<td>Data analysis (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Nov 13</td>
<td>Qualitative research</td>
<td>Chapter 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Nov 20</td>
<td>Historical research</td>
<td>Chapter 8</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Nov 27</td>
<td>QUIZ #2 Data analysis (cont.)</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Dec 4</td>
<td>Summary &amp; Presentations of term projects</td>
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<td>Full term projects due</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Dec 11</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM</td>
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