

INLS 881, Research Issues and Questions I Fall 2014

Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Ph.D.
Email: smhughes@email.unc.edu

Twitter: bridge2lit

Office: Manning 203

Phone: 919-843-5276

Office Hours: Monday 12:00-1:00; Tuesday 12:-1:00, and by appointment

Overview

The goal of this **year-long course** is to prepare students to become productive scholars. Students will be introduced to the range of research questions and issues that arise in the field of information and library science (ILS). The role of both theory and prior empirical research in generating research questions will be discussed. The variety of methods available to conduct ILS research will be reviewed.

The class members will participate in reading, reviewing, analyzing, and discussing, in some detail, relevant research literature. A part of this process of examination and discovery is formulating questions, and considering ways those questions might be addressed. For example, we will be asking questions about the ILS field and disciplines with which we often collaborate:

- Where are we going?
- Are there better/different ways to get there?
- Who gains and who loses?
- What is missing? Why?
- What should be done?

A second goal of this seminar is to assist the participants in being successful as doctoral students at SILS. This means that it is very important that each person has an opportunity to explore and cultivate their individual research interests as they move through the course.

Specifically, this seminar has the goal of helping you to:

- Develop a deeper sense of your research interests,
- Begin to form your own research agenda,
- Develop critical reading/thinking skills,
- Consider the role of research questions, theory, and methods,
- Develop an understanding of the writing requirements of scholarly communication,
- Develop a sense of scholarship and academic life in the information field, and
- Develop an understanding of faculty expectations and program procedures for SILS doctoral students.

Rationale and relationship to the current curriculum. It is required that students take INLS 881 and INLS 882 in consecutive semesters at or near the beginning of their doctoral studies. The discussions in this seminar will help students identify research questions of particular interest to them and will provide a context within which initial explorations of those questions can be conducted.

Assignments & Grading

The assignments for the two-semester seminar aim to foster your growth as a scholar and researcher in information and library science, through participation in discussions, reviews of current issues and the relevant literature, and development of research questions and proposals. The assignments described below should be considered a starting point; they may be modified according to your needs and interests. Please discuss any changes you are considering with the course instructor.

Since this seminar lasts for two semesters, you will receive an “S” (assuming satisfactory progress) for the fall semester grade, and a grade reflecting the quality of your work in the spring (H, P, L, or F). The “S” you received for the fall will be converted to the grade you receive in the spring (H, P, L, or F).

#1 Philosophical presuppositions of your work – Due Fall semester (5%)

Read "Philosophical presuppositions of research" by Jack D. Glazier. Write a brief description (between 2-4 pages) of your background discipline and describe some of the presuppositions and assumptions that you have based upon theories, paradigms, or practices in your discipline. The goal of the assignment is to introduce yourself to others based upon what you know and what you think. I hope that this introduction will become the foundation for identifying questions and issues of interest to you. At minimum, the assignment should help you to think about research in a way that you can relate to more personally. During class on **August 26**, each of you will have the opportunity to share your background with others. You will not read your paper in class, but you will summarize it. The written document is due **September 2**.

#2 Seminar participation and contributions – Due Fall and Spring semesters (20%)

A large portion of this course will be discussion-based and will rely upon everyone's active participation. The best way to prepare for each week's class session is to thoughtfully engage with the assigned readings. To this end, you will write a brief response to each week's readings in an informal, journal-style format. These entries will help you make meaning of the text, clarify your thoughts and opinions, ask questions, and explore your feelings about the week's topic.¹ These entries will be shared with your classmates via a Blog I have created (<http://inls881.blogspot.com/>). You will be expected to read your classmates' entries before class each week. You are also encouraged to respond to your classmates' writing.

Your weekly responses should be brief (around 300 words) and should focus on your reactions to and questions about the text. What did you find surprising? What did you agree or disagree with? What connections do you see to your life, the world, or other readings? What questions do you have after reading the text? Please do not summarize the readings or include lengthy quotations from the readings - keep your entries focused on response rather than review. The style of your entries may be informal – citations are not necessary. To allow time for your classmates and me to read and respond to your entries, each week's response will be due 24 hours before class (i.e., 2:00pm each Monday).

NOTE: No written response is required for Session 1.

¹ McIntosh, J. (2006). Enhancing engagement in reading: Reader response journals in secondary English classrooms. *Language & Literacy*, 8(1).

#3 Topics of Research in ILS: Presentation and Discussion Leader –Due Fall semester (15%)

Each person will be responsible for organizing and leading our exploration of one of the following important topics of research in ILS.

1. Preservation: Personal and cultural
2. Knowledge representation and description
3. Organization of knowledge
4. Personal information management
5. Information retrieval systems
6. Social software and the information behaviors that support it
7. Information needs and their expression
8. Information seeking behaviors: Models and frameworks
9. Information literacy: Models and frameworks

This includes identifying 3-4 articles/readings on the topic for the class to read, interviewing a faculty member (does not need to be someone at SILS; cannot be your advisor) who conducts research in the area, posting thought-provoking discussion questions for the week of your presentation to the class blog, providing a 25-30 minute formal presentation on the topic (may be supported by slides), and managing the in-class discussion of the articles (60 minutes).

During the interview, ask the faculty member about the key research questions in that research area, the theories that are most useful to the faculty member, and the empirical research the faculty member has found most useful to their work in that area. Also ask the faculty member to identify other researchers who focus on this research area.

The articles/readings to be discussed in class must be posted to Sakai at least **3 weeks before** the topic is scheduled to be discussed in class.

Evaluation criteria. The presentations will be evaluated in terms of the depth with which you explain the topic, your selection of and analysis of the articles, the clarity with which you present your ideas to the class, and the extent to which you can get the class engaged in the discussion.

#4 Attendance at Research –Related Lectures – Fall and Spring Semester (10%)

As a doctoral student, it is important that you be an active participant in the research community. Attending lectures at SILS, on UNC's campus (and other university campuses), and at professional meetings are all ways of participating in the research community. SILS sponsors many lectures (including the Henderson and Kilgour Lectures, as well as Cradle Talks). Other departments and schools on UNC's campus (for example, Computer Science, Journalism, and Public Health) as well as those at Duke, NCCU, and NC State also sponsor lectures on topics related to ILS. And of course, a number of professional conferences occur each year.

By the end of the academic year you will attend 6 lectures.

- Fall Semester: You will be expected to attend the Henderson Lecture and **two** other lectures.
- Spring Semester: You will be expected to attend the OCLC/Frederick G. Kilgour Lecture and **two** other lectures.

At the end of each semester you will submit a brief, oral and written (3-4 page) report on what you have learned.

Evaluation Criteria: This assignment will be evaluated in terms of your selection of lecture to attend and the clarity of your summarization and analysis of the lectures.

#5 Annotated Bibliography – Due end of Fall semester (15%)

For the final project for the Fall semester (INLS 881), you will develop an annotated bibliography that explores a research topic/question of interest to you. It is recommended (but not required) that the annotated bibliography relate to your final product for the two-semester course (Assignment #6).

An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and other resources. Each citation is followed by a brief *descriptive* and *evaluative* paragraph: the annotation. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. Annotations are different from the abstracts that you find in your articles. Abstracts are the descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles or in subscription databases. Annotations, on the other hand, are descriptive *and* critical; they discuss the author's point of view, clarity, appropriateness of expression, authority, etc. Creating an annotated bibliography calls for the application of a variety of intellectual skills: concise writing, succinct analysis, and informed library research. You will be retrieving scholarly journal articles and books relevant to your selected topic. You will create citations for these resources using the APA format. You will write concise annotations that summarize the central theme and scope of the articles and books. Each annotation should be no longer than one page single spaced. The following questions should provide a framework for creating your annotation:

What is the author trying to say?

What are the author's principal and subsidiary arguments or theses? What are the important conceptual terms? What does the author seem to assume? What sorts of evidence and methods are used? Can you identify specific passages that support your interpretation? Are there other passages that either contradict or appear less consistent with your understanding? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the author's argument? Can you make sense of, or account for, these differences?

How has the author constructed the text?

What clues can you get from the text's structure? Does the organization give you insights into the argument? Are there patterns in the author's presentation that help you to locate and understand the most valuable material? What can you do to concentrate your attention to and interrogation of the text?

What is the author's purpose?

Why was this work written? To whom was the author speaking and why? What can you know or infer about the author's motivation?

What is the relationship between the author's assumptions and ideas and your own understanding?

How might your response to the work be affected by your values, beliefs, and commitments? Can you read and make sense of the work on its own terms?

How do the author's arguments fit within various communities of discourse?

How is a piece of work connected to the efforts of others dedicated to similar purposes? In what community or communities does the author locate him or herself?

Your annotated bibliography can be arranged as an alphabetical listing by the author's last name, or chronologically by publication date, or by subject matter, theme or other category appropriate for your research. If

you choose to list by theme, category, or subject matter, please indicate such an arrangement. It should contain **12-15 sources**. These can be both conceptual and empirical research.

Please include a brief description of the topic/research question at the beginning of your paper.

You will provide a brief (5-10 minute) oral summary of your annotated bibliography at the end of the Fall semester.

Evaluation criteria: The criteria used to evaluate the annotated bibliography include the quality and relevance of the sources to the topic/question, the completeness of the summary, the validity of the critical statement, and the logic of your claims and interpretation. It is expected that the annotated bibliography will be free from mechanical, grammatical, punctuation, and spelling errors. It will be due **December 1st by 5:00pm**.

EXAMPLE ANNOTATION:

Semel, S. F. and A. R. Sadovnik (2008). "The Contemporary Small-School Movement: Lessons from the History of Progressive Education." *Teachers College Record* 110(9): 1744-1771.

This article examines trends in the pedagogy, leadership, and community of the progressive school movement over time. The authors identify curriculum and pedagogic practices in two early progressive schools: the Dalton School and City and Country School. These schools were small, emphasized a child-centered approach, encouraged inquiry, and had a strong sense of vision and community. They did not, however, represent the social class and racial diversity of the communities in which they were located, with most students coming from white affluent families. In this way they did not achieve Dewey's vision of a democratic education for children of diverse backgrounds. The authors then detail the contemporary progressive education reform that began in the 1980's and note how it echoed many principles of the earlier movement. They focus on the success of Central Park East Secondary School (CPESS), founded in 1985 by Deborah Meier, as an example of how progressive education can work for low-income children and children of color. They analyze the decline of the school to its state of crisis by 2002, focusing on lessons learned for the contemporary small-schools movement. They conclude that strong leadership and capacity-building are essential to the success of small progressive schools. They identify common pedagogic practice throughout the history of the progressive school movement, such as small, caring communities, integrated thematic curriculum, student-centeredness and a climate of respect. They also identify the challenges faced by small schools related to high-stakes testing and government mandates.

The article provides a historical perspective on the current small-schools movement by identifying its roots in the progressivism of the early 20th century and more recent education reforms of the 1980s. The authors successfully identify commonalities among the schools studied such as small, caring communities, integrated thematic curriculum, student-centeredness, and having a climate of respect. They show that remarkably little has changed in progressive pedagogic ideals since the early 20th century; this is both encouraging and a little startling. They do not bring up the question of why our society appears to be so resistant to these pedagogic ideals that they are still considered "progressive" instead of mainstream after having been successfully practiced for over 100 years. The authors argue that strong leadership and a sense of community are essential to small schools' success and that the climate created by high-stakes testing is damaging to progressive schools. They highlight CPESS's success and identify characteristics of its pedagogic approach that may be instructional to contemporary small schools: an integrated curriculum, an advisory system, strong community and alternative assessment. These attributes are similar to the early progressive schools studied, with the notable exception that the student body at CPESS mirrored the social class and racial diversity of the community in which it was located. The identify reasons for the changes and sometimes downfall of these progressive schools: loss of strong leadership when a charismatic founder moves on, challenges of meeting high-stakes testing mandates, and

a gradual moving away from the original vision of the school as faculty turns over. The central message is helpful when examining modern small school reform: look to early schools as models for a sense of community, effective pedagogic practices and strong leadership that is essential to being an effective progressive school.

#6 Final product: Due end of Spring semester (35%)

The major product for the two-semester seminar will be a significant work: a scholarly literature review, a proposal for a research study, an application for a research fellowship, or an article resulting from a research project. You will give a presentation of your work to the class at the end of the spring semester. You should start planning your work by the end of the fall term, at the latest, so that you can share your plans as part of our discussion of goals for the spring.

Milestones: In the Spring semester I will give you some milestones to help you keep moving, to keep me informed of your progress, and to help initiate conversations between us if there is any need. Remember that I am happy to talk with you about your work at any time!

Evaluation criteria. The criteria used to evaluate your final product will be similar to the criteria routinely applied to scholarly publications. These include the significance of the question/problem to the field, originality, the appropriateness and quality of the methods used (where relevant), the adequacy of the citations to previous work, the validity and logic of your claims and interpretation, and the organization, clarity, and style of your presentation.

Student Responsibilities

Our overarching goal is to build a professional community in which an exchange of ideas and opinions is respected and welcome. You will be responsible for establishing your own work schedules and internal deadlines. You need to be resourceful in locating and retrieving information to complete your assignments. You are expected to arrive in class having read, considered, and mentally critiqued each of the items and topics listed on the class schedule. Assignments should be completed on time. Since meeting deadlines is an important professional responsibility, grades on late work will be lowered one full letter. The ability to work successfully with your colleagues will be vital to your career as a professional. Consequently, you must be thoughtful in your communication with your peers, instructor, and resource people.

UNC Honor Code

The Honor Code, which prohibits giving or receiving unauthorized aid in the completion of assignments, is in effect in this class. Any incidence of plagiarism or other academic dishonesty will result in an F for the course.

SILS Diversity Statement

In support of the University's diversity goals and the mission of the School of Information and Library Science, SILS embraces diversity as an ethical and societal value. We broadly define diversity to include race, gender, national origin, ethnicity, religion, social class, age, sexual orientation and physical and learning ability. As an academic community committed to preparing our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly multicultural and global society we strive to:

- Ensure inclusive leadership, policies and practices;
- Integrate diversity into the curriculum and research;
- Foster a mutually respectful intellectual environment in which diverse opinions are valued;
- Recruit traditionally underrepresented groups of students, faculty and staff; and
- Participate in outreach to underserved groups in the State.

The statement represents a commitment of resources to the development and maintenance of an academic environment that is open, representative, reflective and committed to the concepts of equity and fairness.

Students with Disabilities

“The Department of Disability Services (DDS), a part of the Division of Student Affairs, works with departments throughout the University to assure that the programs and facilities of the University are accessible to every student in the University community. Additionally, DDS provides reasonable accommodations so students with disabilities who are otherwise qualified may, as independently as possible, meet the demands of University life.” Visit their website at <http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/> for more information.

Outline and Schedule for Fall 2014 (INLS 881)

Session 1: August 26, Introductions; Scope of ILS; Being a doctoral student

What are your current interests? What does it mean to pursue those interests as a doctoral student? What subjects and approaches characterize information and library science?

- Glazier, J.D. (1997). "Appendix A: Philosophical presuppositions of research." In Powell, R.R., *Basic Research Methods for Librarians*, Third edition. Ablex Publishing. [\[link\]](#)
- Bates, M. (1999). The invisible substrate of information science. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 50(12), 1043-1050. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Saracevic, T. (1999) Information science. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science*, 50(12), 1051-1063. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Shera, J.H. (1968). An epistemological foundation for library science. In Montgomery, E.B.(ed.), *The Foundations of Access to Knowledge: A Symposium*. Syracuse University, 7-25. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Heilprin, L.B. (1968). Response [to Shera]. In Montgomery, E.B. (ed.), *The Foundations of Access to Knowledge: A Symposium*. Syracuse University, 26-35. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

Session 2: September 2, Anatomy of a Research Question

What are the important research questions in information and library science today? What research methods are used to explore them?

- Booth, A. (2006). Clear and present questions: Formulating questions for evidence based practice. *Library Hi Tech*, 24 (3): 355-368. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Bryman, A. (2007). The research question in social research: What is its role? *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 10 (1): 5-20. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

- Kelly, D., & Sugimoto, C.R. (2013). A systematic review of interactive information retrieval evaluations studies, 1967-2006. *JASIST*, 64(4): 745-770. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Koufogiannakis, D., & Crumley, E. (2006). Research in librarianship: Issues to consider. *Library Hi Tech*, 24 (3): 324-340. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Wildemuth, B.M. (2009). Applications of Social Research Methods to Questions in Information and Library Science. Westport, Conn.: Libraries Unlimited. Chapters 2-6 [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

**Locate 2 research articles on a topic of interest to you. Be prepared to share the research questions and a brief description of the research methodology used with the class.

Session 3: September 9, Literature reviews

What is a literature review? Why are they important for researchers? How do I find and analyze the literature that's most pertinent to my research questions? How do I write up what I've learned, and get it published?

- Webster, J., & Watson, R. (2002). Analyzing the past to prepare for the future: Writing a literature review. *MIS Quarterly*, 26(2), xiii-xxiii. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Boote, D.N., & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher*, 34(6), 3-15 [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Bruce, C. (2001). Interpreting the scope of their literature reviews: Significant differences in research students' concerns. *New Library World*, 102(1163/1164), 158-165 [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Lunenburg, F.C., & Irby, B.J. (2008). Writing the literature review [and] Synthesizing the literature. In *Writing a Successful Thesis or Dissertation: Tips and Strategies for Students in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 142-164. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

** Create an outline of the literature reviews from the articles you looked at for the September 4th. Be prepared to discuss in class.

Session 4: September 16, Two critical aspects of scholarly work: theory and methods

Guest Speaker: Barbara Wildemuth

What is theory, and why do researchers use/need theory? What methods are used in ILS research, and why?

- Case, D.O. (2007). Theories (section 7.2), [and] Sources of theory in information seeking (section 7.3). In *Looking for Information: A Survey of Research on Information Seeking, Needs, and Behavior*. 2nd ed. Amsterdam: Academic Press, 145-151 and 173-190. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Case, D.O. (2007). The research process (Chapter 8). In *Looking for Information: A Survey of Research on Information Seeking, Needs, and Behavior*. 2nd ed. Amsterdam: Academic Press, 145-151 and 173-190. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Chatman, E.A. (2000). Framing social life in theory and research. *New Review of Information Behavior Research*, 3-17.
- Thompson, K.M. (2009). Remembering Elfreda Chatman: A champion of theory development in library and information science education. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 50(2), 119-126. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

- Kim, S.J., & Jeong, D. Y. (2006). An analysis of the development and use of theory in library and information science research articles. *Library & Information Science Research*, 28(4), 548-562. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

Session 5: September 22nd and 23rd, Henderson Lecture & Follow-up Discussion

We will meet from 2:00-3:00 to discuss the Henderson Lecture.

Henderson Lecture

September 22, 2014

3:00pm – 5:00pm

Dr. Judith Donath, founder of the Social Media Group at MIT Media Lab, and fellow at the Berkman Center. She has a new book titled [“The Social Machine: Designs for Living Online.”](#)

Location: TBD

Session 6: September 30, Measuring the Impact of Scholarly Productivity

Guest Speaker: Cassidy Sugimoto (via SKYPE)

The information life cycle begins when someone records their current knowledge. These information objects are of great interest to information professionals, and their later use is affected by how they are created and recorded. They are also one means by which scholars' work can have an impact, and so may be viewed as one indicator of scholarly productivity.

- Bollen, J., Van de Sompel, H., Smith, J.A., & Luce, R. (2005). Toward alternative metrics of journal impact: A comparison of download and citation data. *Information Processing & Management*, 41(6), 1419-1440. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Bornmann, L. (2012). What is societal impact of research and how can it be assessed? A literature survey. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology*, 64(2), 217-233. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Cronin, B., & Meho, L. (2006). Using the h-index to rank influential information scientists. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology*, 57(9), 1275-1278. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Lariviere, V., Sugimoto, C.R., & Cronin, B. (2012). A bibliometric chronicling of Library and Information Science's first hundred years. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology*, 63(5), 997-1016. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Meho, L.I., & Sugimoto, C.R. (2009). Assessing the scholarly impact of information studies: A tale of two citation databases--Scopus and Web of Science. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology*, 60(12), 2499-2508. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]
- Onodera, N., & Yoshikane, F. (2014). Factors affecting citation rates of research articles. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science & Technology*, published online 2014. [Course Documents: Resources on class Sakai site]

STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Session 7: October 7

Session 8: October 14

October 21, NO CLASS

Session 9: October 28

Session 10: November 4

Session 11: November 11

Session 12: November 18, Discussion of lectures attended Fall semester, written report due

November 25, NO CLASS

Session 13: December 1: Summary of annotated bibliographies due.

December 1: 5:00pm: ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE