

Syllabus INLS 151

Retrieving and Analyzing Information , Summer 2018

Instructor: Jacob Hill
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Class Meeting: Manning 001, Monday–Thursday 3:00-5:00
Office Hours: By appointment

Prerequisites:

This course has no prerequisites

Course Description:

Introduction to and application of the processes that can be used in seeking information, evaluating the quality of the information retrieved, and synthesizing the information into a useful form.

Learning objectives:

- Through this course you will:
- Consider the meaning(s) and role(s) of information in contexts of academic research, decision-making and everyday life
- Develop an understanding of information retrieval principles, systems and sources; enhance your skills to use them effectively; examine information sources such as bibliographic databases, primary sources in a variety of formats (data sets, archives, special collections, etc.)
- Identify and apply traditional, nuanced, and emerging criteria for assessing the quality of information
- Clarify your understanding of the scholarly communication cycle; learn to consume and engage effectively with the variety of resulting information products
- Develop your confidence and expertise in addressing issues of ethics and integrity surrounding the use of information
- Learn about unique and specialized resources available through the University of North Carolina

Course Policies:

I will come to every class prepared and I expect the same from you. I have assigned a moderate amount of reading with the expectation that students will read carefully (unless otherwise stated). Much of the class time will be spent mastering difficult concepts individually and through group assignments. Attendance and participation is 25% of your grade. If you are not prepared for class, you will have difficulty mastering the material and it will show in your final grade. You will need a laptop in class to complete many of the assignments, however, they can also be a distraction. During lectures, you may be asked to close your laptops.

Policies on Academic Integrity and Diversity:

Chapel Hill has had a student-administered honor system and judicial system for over 100 years. Because academic honesty and the development and nurturing of trust and trustworthiness are important to all of us as individuals, and are encouraged and promoted by the honor system, this is a most significant University tradition. More information is available at <http://studentconduct.unc.edu/honor-system>

The UNC Honor Code is in effect for all work in this course. Chapter 5 of the "Instrument of Student Judicial Governance" (<https://studentconduct.unc.edu/sites/studentconduct.unc.edu/files/documents/Instrument.pdf>) discusses Academic Dishonesty; you are responsible for being familiar with, and abiding by all aspects of the "Instrument".

Grading Breakdown & Policies:

Research Project 35%
Attendance & Participation 25%
Midterm Exam 20%
Final Exam 20%

Assignment Descriptions:

The **Research Project** assignment is designed to make you think deeply and critically about the resources you choose and to read and analyze them carefully. You will follow the steps of the research process outlined in the first lecture: identify and develop your topic, find background information, use catalogs to find media and books, use indexes to find periodicals and articles, evaluate what you find, and cite what you find. You will write a short paper 2-3 pages documenting your process. You will select 10 sources, read each one closely, and write an annotated bibliography entry for it. You will cite the article or book chapter according to any standard citation format and beneath the citation you will write detailed notes on the reading. Questions to consider are: What is the authors main thesis or argument? Does the thesis seem to be highly disputed or generally accepted? If it is highly disputed, what are alternative arguments? If generally accepted, the evidence is less significant. What evidence is given to support this thesis? What are the key points of the article? How can the article be organized into a conceptual outline? How does the reading relate to other readings? How will you use your reading in your research project? **DO NOT** use these questions rigidly. All questions will not apply to all articles. Use them as a loose guide to think about the scope of your entry. Each entry will be graded on a scale of 0 to 3:

- 0 = you didn't do the entry, or it was significantly late
- .30 = little thought put into the entry; quotations were haphazardly chosen or overused
- .75 = overall decent entry, but missing some significant points
- 1 = strong entry; clear articulation of main points, underlying problems, open questions, arguments, etc.; able to link reading to larger body of literature through one or more significant concepts or questions

You will prepare a 20 minute presentation on your research process and topic. Further instructions will be given in class. The grading breakdown for the assignment is as follows:

- 10: Scoping project milestones and meeting deadlines
- 7.5: Research process report
- 10: Annotated Bibliography
- 7.5: Final presentation

Please contact me early in the semester if you have any questions about what you should be doing!

Standard Grading Description:

The following grade scale will be used **AS A GUIDELINE** (subject to any curve) for undergraduate students. Definitions are from: <http://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/explanation-of-grading-system/> (underlining is my emphasis)

Grade Range	Definition
A 90-100%	Mastery of course content at the highest level of attainment that can reasonably be expected of students at a given stage of development. The A grade states clearly that the students have shown such outstanding promise in the aspect of the discipline under study that he/she may be strongly encouraged to continue.
B 80-89.9%	Strong performance demonstrating a high level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The B grade states that the student has shown solid promise in the aspect of the discipline under study
C 70-79.9%	A totally acceptable performance demonstrating an adequate level of attainment for a student at a given stage of development. The C grade states that, while not yet showing unusual promise, the student may continue to study in the discipline with reasonable hope of intellectual development.
D 60-69.9%	A marginal performance in the required exercises demonstrating a minimal passing level of attainment. A student has given no evidence of prospective growth in the discipline; an accumulation of D grades should be taken to mean that the student would be well advised not to continue in the academic field.
F 0-59.9%	For whatever reason, an unacceptable performance. The F grade indicates that the student's performance in the required exercises has revealed almost no understanding of the course content. A grade of F should warrant an advisor's questioning whether the student may suitably register for further study in the discipline before remedial work is undertaken.

Communications:

The best way to get in contact with me (other than talking to me after class or during my office hours) is by email: jthill@live.unc.edu. Note that I receive a large amount of email and while I try to reply to student emails within 24 hours, there are times that it may take me 2-3 days to reply, especially on weekends. You may also call or text me at 702-335-2653.

Emails and text messages are both good ways of letting me know if you can't be in class, or if you want to make an appointment with me. If you want to discuss something we talked about in class, an assignment or some other matter, please make an appointment with me.

Date	Topic	To read before class:
Mon. June 25th	Syllabus, The Research Process, Zotero	Course syllabus
Tues. June 26th	Bibliographic Networks	
Wed. June 27th	The Web (Problem Set 1)	
Thur. June 28th	Information Seeking Behaviors (Problem Set 1)	
Mon. July 2nd	Google Scholar	
Tues. July 3rd	WorldCat	
Wed. July 4th (no class, Independence Day)		
Thur. July 5th (class?)		
Mon. July 9th	Midterm Review	
Tues. July 10th	Midterm	
Wed. July 11th	Boolean & Ranked Retrieval	
Thur. July 12th	Guest Lecture (GOV'T docs and public info)	
Mon. July 16th	Wilson Library (field trip)	
Tues. July 17th	Health Sciences Library (field trip)	http://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.0020124
Wed. July 18th	Vector Space Operations	https://newleftreview.org/II/92/franco-moretti-dominique-pestre-bankspeak

Thur. July 19th	Thinking Critically about Academic Research	https://www.theverge.com/2014/2/25/5445104/science-publishers-withdraw-more-than-120-computer-generated-papers
Mon. July 23rd	Evaluating Statistical Claims	https://www.theverge.com/2014/3/11/5495654/scientists-fail-to-replicate-groundbreaking-stem-cell-technique
Tues. July 24th	Recommender Systems	
Wed. July 25th	Class Presentations	
Thur. July 26th	Final Review	
Tues. July 31 3:00-6:00pm	Final Exam	