

7920w10: Syllabus

LIS 7920 G01: Information Seeking Behavior, Winter 2010

St. Catherine University

Master of Library and Information Science Program

(As of 1/21/10)

Credit hours: 3

Time: Saturdays, 8:00am–1:00pm, CDC 005

Instructor: Joyce Yukawa

Office: CDC 050; Hours: after class & by appointment

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I. Course Description

This course is a survey of pertinent research on information seeking behavior in library and information science and other fields of study with an emphasis on research methods and application to practice. Theories and models of information seeking behavior will be reviewed with particular attention to differing contexts, information seekers and domains. Assignments will include in-class exercises, a literature review in a chosen area of study, and original research resulting in a presentation and research proposal. Prerequisites: 7010, 7030, 7040.

II. Recommended Texts

Required

Introduction to qualitative research methods.

Richards, L. & Morse, J. M. (2007). *Readme first for a user's guide to qualitative methods (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Recommended

Some required readings will be assigned from Case (available for purchase in SCU Bookstore and on reserve in SCU Library). **Please read Chapters 1–3 of Case before the first class.**

Case, D. O. (2007). *Looking for information: A survey of research on information seeking, needs, and behavior (2nd ed.)*. New York: Academic Press.

Please also read before the first class:

Taylor, D. (n.d.). The literature review: A few tips on conducting it. Retrieved from <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/pdf/litrev.pdf>

In addition, for those interested in quantitative research, a good online resource is:

Trochim, W. (2006). *Research methods knowledge base*. Online: <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/index.php> Recommended reference for quantitative methods.

Other reading assignments are noted on the course calendar and readings and resources pages and may vary over the semester. Changes or additions will be given at least one class in advance.

III. Learning Objectives

MLIS Student Learning Objectives

The objectives of the MLIS degree program are to develop information literate, reflective practitioners who have the ability to:

- Identify and analyze information needs and opportunities of individuals and organizations, both within the traditional information service areas and the broader information sector. (SLO 1)
- Develop and apply critical thinking to solve information problems by integrating relevant models, theories, research and practices. (SLO 3)
- Communicate information and knowledge from library and information studies and related disciplines in a variety of formats, including effective use of oral, written, and technological presentations. (SLO 4)
- Promote the professional values of ethical responsibility, intellectual freedom, and universal access to information. (SLO 7)

Course Learning Objectives

By successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify concepts related to information behavior
- Discuss models and theories of information seeking behavior
- Discuss research methods and existing research in the field of information behavior
- Conduct their own research into information seeking behavior and present those results to their

peers

The main goal of this class is that you will feel confident and be capable of doing self-initiated research on information seeking behavior.

IV. Course Philosophy & Learning Strategies

The approach taken in this class is inquiry and project/problem-based learning, described as:

- Student-driven
- Focused on exploration, questioning, critical thinking, and reflection
- Goes beyond information accumulation in a quest for knowledge that favors depth over breadth
- Seeks solutions, not answers
- Collaborative learning using diverse expertise to teach each other
- Peer- and self-assessment

This is a broad framework for class activities. We will work on fleshing this out together here in our Class Wiki.

Building Bridges to Professional Settings

Classroom Learning	Bridges	Learning in Professional Settings
Build on your ideas of <u>information seeking</u> through experience, exposure to the ideas of others, observations, collaboration, and reflection	Negotiate meaning and expertise through individual and group work, supported by our Class Wiki	Develop metaphors, models, and expertise related to information seeking through experience, collaboration, and reflection
Build on your ideas of <u>research methods</u> through experience, exposure to the ideas of others, observations, collaboration, and reflection	Negotiate meaning and expertise through individual and group work, supported by our Class Wiki; Literature Review, Pilot Study, Research Proposal	Develop metaphors, models, and expertise related to research methods through experience, collaboration, and reflection
<u>Conduct research</u> and help others conduct research in authentic contexts	Negotiate practice through individual and group work, supported by our Class Wiki; Pilot Study	Conduct individual and collaborative research
<u>Teamwork and leadership</u> in class	Negotiate professional identity and leadership through participation and interaction	Teamwork and leadership in professional settings

Resources we bring to the learning:

- Knowledge of and experience with information seeking and helping others seek information
- Knowledge of and experience with critical thinking and research

- Teamwork and leadership in social and professional settings
- Motivation

V. Assignments and Course Requirements

The Literature Review, Pilot Study Design, and Pilot Study Report assignments will allow you to incrementally build your Research Proposal over the semester. While the first three assignments have points associated with them, final points will not be given until the Research Proposal is submitted. In other words, the points received on the first three assignments can change in the Research Proposal if improvements are made.

Citation style: Preferred style is APA. For more information on style, refer to the citation style guides at [MLIS Portable Resources](#).

Literature Review

A literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by credible scholars and researchers. In writing the literature review, your purpose is to convey to your reader what knowledge and ideas have been established on a topic, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. The literature review will constitute the first part of your research proposal.

Due date: Feb 27, for written and oral presentation
Points: contributes 20 points to the research proposal

Pilot Study Design

Design of the pilot study that will be implemented during the semester and included in your Research Proposal.

Due date: Mar 6
Points: contributes 18 points to the research proposal

Pilot Study Report

Report of the preliminary results of the pilot study that will be included in your Research Proposal.

Due date: Apr 10
Points: contributes 12 points to the research proposal

Research Proposal

The purpose of the research proposal assignment is to provide opportunities to:

- Design, implement, and evaluate a small-scale research project on information seeking behavior;
- Develop a proposal with potential for implementation in your future professional lives;
- Work on collaborative research, a common situation in professional settings.

Students may do individual or group research projects, depending on research interests. We will negotiate the forming of these groups in class. Class time will be provided for team work, feedback and troubleshooting.

Due date: Apr 17 and May 1

Points: 60 (60% of grade)

Research Proposal Presentation

The purpose of the presentation is to provide an opportunity to do a professional presentation of your research proposal, following guidelines for professional or conference presentations, as well as participate as a professional audience that critically examines the quality of the work and provides constructive feedback.

Due date: Apr 17 and May 1

Points: 10 (10% of grade)

Research Blog

Students will be required to keep an individual research blog. The focus questions you are asked to address in your individual Research Blog aim to help you consolidate what you learn from the readings and focus your knowledge and understanding on your research project.

Submit your logs weekly, as a "blog" in your individual wiki pages or email attachment sent to the instructor. One week before the end of the course, look back over your blog entries and prepare a one-page summary of what you believe you have accomplished for yourself and submit this by the last day of class. Writing can be informal, but should demonstrate thoughtful reflection on thoughts, feelings, and activities related to core concepts, learning discoveries, and collaborative work.

Due dates: weekly; Research Blog Summary due Apr 24

Points: 20 (20% of grade)

Class Participation

Active class participation is essential to the atmosphere of this class because we learn from each other and participation acts as a model of future team work. Please make every effort to attend class. If you know you will be missing a class session, please make alternate arrangements well in advance. If you are unable to attend at the last moment, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. Full points (10 points) will be given if all the following criteria are met: Completing all assignments on time, perfect attendance, regularly contributing to class discussions, regularly contributing in small group exercises, encouraging others to participate in asking questions and making relevant comments during class discussions and lectures. The scale goes down to one (1) point for the following: two or more absences, incomplete assignments, no contributions to class discussions, little contribution to small group work.

Points: 10 (10% of grade)

Assignment Due Dates

All assignments will be due at the beginning of the class period. Late assignments will be accepted for up to 3 days after they are due, with a 5% reduction in grade per day late.

Sometimes emergency or other understandable circumstances prevent students from turning in assignments on time. In these cases, assignments more than 3 days late may be accepted on consultation with the instructor.

Professionalism and Academic integrity

You are responsible for checking your St. Kate's email account for messages from me. Check your email at least once a day.

St. Catherine University expects each of its students to uphold the Student Code of Conduct, which includes civility, respect for differences, and academic integrity and honesty. Appropriate credit must be given to original creators of all works used. Major violations are cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes copying others' works, collaborating without authorization, and accessing others' computer files without authorization. Plagiarism includes intentionally or unintentionally using someone else's words, works, thoughts, or expression of ideas without giving proper credit. Please see the St.

Catherine University Academic Integrity Policy

http://minerva.stkate.edu/gradcatalog.nsf/web_retrieve/mqsn-7amlvf?OpenDocument

Special Needs

Special needs can include, but are not limited to, factors influencing the learning process in and out of the classroom, such as mobility, physical, learning, and cognitive challenges. Students with special needs are invited to contact the Disability Services office so that accommodations can be provided. Please also inform me if you have special needs.

Emergency Situations

The H1N1 flu (swine flu) has been labeled a pandemic by the World Health Organization. The Centers for Disease Control has published a [Q & A about H1N1](#), which has helpful advice for taking proper precautions. St. Kate's also has an [H1N1 Emergency Preparedness](#) page. We hope no one will be infected, but if you are, we will make every effort to allow you to complete the course without physically attending class.

Since St. Catherine University is committed to the healthy wellbeing of our community, we support The Centers for Disease Control's following recommendation: students, faculty, or staff with influenza like illnesses (temperature of 100.0 or greater, plus a cough or sore throat) are directed to self isolate (or stay home) for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine. In the event that students are unable to attend classes due to this self isolation recommendation, they should notify their professors of their absence. Faculty will provide opportunities for these students to participate in alternative delivery of class material due to illness.

Grading Scale

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
94-100	90-93	86-89	82-85	78-81	74-77	70-73	65-69	60-64	0-59

Assignment	Points
Literature Review	(20%)
Pilot Study Design	(18%)
Pilot Study Report	(12%)
Research Proposal	60%
Research Proposal Presentation	10%
Research Blog	20%
Class Participation	10%
Total	100%

7920w10: Calendar

As of 1/18/10 (subject to change)

Session & Date	Topics	Readings Due	Assignments Due
<u>Session 1</u> Jan 30	<u>Course overview</u> : What is information? What is information seeking? What is a good research question? What are the elements of a research proposal? What is a good literature review? <u>Workshop</u> : Brainstorming possible research topics.	<u>Readings 1</u> - Before the first class, read: 1. Ch.1-3 of Case 2. Taylor, The literature review.	Prior to Session 1, observe information seeking behavior in a library or other setting, noting any patterns to share in class. Also, think about questions you have about information seeking behavior that could lead you to a good research topic. <u>Research Blog 1</u> will be done in class. Initial Questionnaire
Feb 6	Interweek	<u>Readings 2</u> - Asking good research questions; Research approaches	<u>Research Blog 2</u>
<u>Session 2</u> Feb 13	<u>Topics</u> : How do we study information seeking behavior? What types of research approaches fit our questions? What is the role of theory? What is the role of practice? What models of information behavior are good guides? <u>Workshop</u> : Presentation & discussion of sample studies. Group feedback on your research topics.	<u>Readings 3</u> - Theories and models of ISB; Example studies	<u>Research Blog 3</u> <u>Proposal Outline and Timeline</u> (can be very draft-y) <u>Example Study analysis</u>
Feb 20	Interweek	<u>Readings 4</u> - Ethics & human subjects	<u>Research Blog 4</u>
<u>Session 3</u> Feb 27	<u>Topics</u> : What should we consider when designing a research project? How do we collect data that will answer our questions? <u>Presentations</u> : Lit Reviews and group feedback.	<u>Readings 5</u> - Data collection	<u>Research Blog 5</u> <u>Literature Review</u> & presentation
<u>Session 4</u> Mar 6	<u>Topics</u> : What constitutes evidence in qualitative research? How do we analyze data for meaning? What constitutes credibility in qualitative research? What are	<u>Readings 6</u> - Data analysis 1 -	Pilot Study Design <u>Research Blog 6</u>

Mar 10	the pitfalls of qualitative data analysis? <u>Workshop</u> : Discussion of pilot study designs and instruments.	coding and abstracting	<u>Temperature Check</u> (in class)
Mar 13	Interweek	<u>Readings 7</u> - Data analysis 2 - induction	<u>Research Blog 7</u>
<u>Session 5</u> Mar 20	<u>Topics</u> : What are the findings of research by occupational category? What is the process of induction in qualitative data analysis? How can qualitative data analysis software be used (example: NVivo)? What are the differences between qualitative and quantitative data analysis? Guest: Sook Lim. <u>Workshop</u> : Examination of data analysis procedures of sample studies. Discussion of pilot study designs and instruments.	<u>Readings 8</u> - ISB research by occupational category	<u>Research Blog 8</u>
Mar 27	Interweek		<u>Research Blog 9</u>
Apr 3	SPRING BREAK		<u>Research Blog 10</u>
<u>Session 6</u> Apr 10	<u>Topics</u> : What are the findings of research by demographic group, role, etc.? What are the strengths and weaknesses of various theories in information seeking? <u>Workshop</u> : Feedback on pilot study reports.	<u>Readings 9</u> - ISB research by demographic group, etc.	<u>Research Blog 11</u> <u>Pilot Study Report</u>
<u>Session 7</u> Apr 17	<u>Presentations</u> : Research proposals and discussion. <u>Topics</u> : What are current trends and issues in LIS research? What are the connections between ISB research and LIS practice? What obstacles exist to librarians conducting research? How can the research-practice gap be overcome? <u>Workshop</u> : Extending our research proposals to further research and/or better practice.	<u>Readings 10</u> - Bridging the research-practice gap	<u>Research Blog 12</u> <u>Research Proposal & Presentation</u> Group 1
Apr 24	Interweek		<u>Research Blog</u> Summary
<u>Session 8</u> May 1	<u>Presentations</u> : Research proposals and discussion. Summary discussion of individual “learnings”	None.	<u>Research Proposal & Presentation</u> Group 2