WINTER 2018

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Website: Brightspace

Questions about research ethics should be directed to me or to Ashley Cummiskey at a.doyle@dal.ca

Questions about Indigenous research topics should be directed to me or to Morning Star Padilla at mspadilla@dal.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION
All information professionals require knowledge of formal research processes in order to support the goals of their organizations through evidence-informed decision-making. The course introduces students to the fundamental concepts of research; the nature and uses of research; philosophical underpinnings of qualitative and quantitative research frameworks, tools and methodologies; research ethics; evaluation of published reports, writing research proposals; and project management.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES
None. This is a required course for the MLIS program, and is typically taken in the second semester of first year. It is helpful but not required to have completed INFO 5500 (Information and Society) and INFO 5530 (Information Sources, Services, & Retrieval).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. To provide an understanding of the principles and methodologies of research appropriate to information managers. This understanding will enable students and graduates to be managers who engage in evidence-informed decision-making. This understanding will also aid students to comprehend the role of research in adding to knowledge and advancing the field of IM.
2. To enable students to become intelligent consumers of research, which involves the ability to read and critically analyse relevant research literature.
3. To offer students an opportunity to understand the steps involved in research and to apply concepts central to the research process, e.g., to formulate a research question about an information studies problem, and to apply appropriate research methodologies to that problem.
4. To allow students to become familiar with the entire research process in order to assist clients who are themselves engaged in research.

LEARNING OUTCOMES
By the conclusion of the course, students will:

I. Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the research process.
II. Be capable of critically evaluating published and unpublished research.
III. Demonstrate an understanding of selected research methods.
IV. Have a firm grounding in ethical research.
V. Possess an understanding of research in practice in various contexts.
VI. Develop, propose, and execute a research proposal.
VII. Produce a research report.
INTEGRATION OF MLIS COMPETENCIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROGRAM COMPETENCY</th>
<th>LEARNING OUTCOME</th>
<th>COURSE ASSESSMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Management of Information Technology 1.6</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Literature Review, Poster Presentation, Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Information Management Leadership 2.2, 2.3</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Ethics, Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Risk &amp; Change Management 3.8</td>
<td>IV, V</td>
<td>Ethics, Research Proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. User-centred Information Services 4.1, 4.2, 4.6</td>
<td>V</td>
<td>Seminar YWtL, Poster Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Research and Evaluation 5.1, 5.2, 5.3</td>
<td>I-VII</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Workplace Skills &amp; Attributes:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Collaborate &amp; communicate 6.1.1, 6.1.3, 6.1.6</td>
<td>III, V</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Organize, Plan &amp; Manage 6.2.1, 6.2.3, 6.2.4</td>
<td>I-VII</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Develop Personally &amp; Professionally 6.3.1, 6.3.2, 6.3.3</td>
<td>I-VII</td>
<td>All</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

METHODS OF EVALUATION
Detailed instructions regarding each assignment will be provided. Assessment of all assignments is directly related to attention to the instructions, clarity of expression and presentation, and evidence of significant analysis and reflection.
See also the SIM Grading Policy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment name</th>
<th>Group/Individual</th>
<th>Worth (%)</th>
<th>Due date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review</td>
<td>Individual*</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>29 January</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethics</td>
<td>Group*</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation/Qualitative Description</td>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26 February</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster Presentation</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal</td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2 April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar: Your Week to Lead</td>
<td>Individual*</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>varies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* There may be both Group and Individual elements to these assignments, but the grade will be based on the category indicated above.

LEARNING MATERIALS

This required textbook (Leedy & Ormrod) is available at the bookstore and wherever fine books are sold. Some previous editions, including Kindle versions, are floating around; there are key differences (in page numbers and content) but recent editions, ebook or print, are perfectly acceptable. I will also post readings for most weeks on Brightspace.
INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS
Preparation for each week will include required readings from the course textbook and other sources. Many weeks will include lectures from the instructor, guest speakers, class and group discussions, research methods practical exercises, and individual reports. As this is a graduate-level class, I expect participation in class discussion and exercises.

TECHNOLOGY USED
The course website, including the current syllabus, is on Brightspace. I will use Brightspace to communicate outside class through Announcements and email, and I may require some assignments to be submitted through this site. Assignments will require skills in information search and retrieval, much of which may be online. You should be familiar with word processing and spreadsheet software.

CLASS POLICIES
Attendance
Class attendance is required in all MLIS courses and is included in the participation mark. Attendance records will be kept by the instructor.

Citation Style
SIM courses use APA as the default standard citation style. Unless the instructor provides alternative written instructions, please use the APA citation style in your assignments to briefly identify (cite) other people's ideas and information and to indicate the sources of these citations in the References list at the end of the assignment. For more information on APA style, consult Dalhousie Library website at https://libraries.dal.ca/help/style-guides.html or the APA's Frequently Asked Questions about APA

Late penalties for assignments
A penalty for late assignments will be assessed, unless prior permission has been given by the instructor to submit an assignment late, which normally will be for extended illness, medical, or family emergencies only (see below). Late submissions will be assessed a penalty of five percent per day, including weekends. Assignments will not normally be accepted seven days or more after the due date; in such cases the student will receive a grade of zero.

Missed or Late Academic Requirements due to Student Absence:
Dalhousie University recognizes that students may experience short-term physical or mental health conditions, or other extenuating circumstances that may affect their ability to attend required classes, tests, exams or submit other coursework.

Dalhousie students are asked to take responsibility for their own short-term absences (3 days or less) by contacting their instructor by phone or email prior to the academic requirement deadline or scheduled time AND by submitting a completed Student Declaration of Absence form to their instructor in case of missed or late academic requirements. Only 2 separate Student Declaration of Absence forms may be submitted per course during a term (note: faculty, college, school, instructor or course-specific guidelines may set a lower maximum).

SIM GRADING POLICY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Demonstrates original work of distinction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>Demonstrates high-level command of the subject matter and an ability for critical analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>Demonstrates above-average command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Demonstrates average command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>Demonstrates acceptable command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>Demonstrates minimally acceptable command of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;70</td>
<td>Unacceptable for credit towards a Master's degree.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

ACCOMMODATION POLICY FOR STUDENTS
Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers experienced related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian human rights legislation.
Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to fully participate in the class.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

In general:
The commitment of the Faculty of Management is to graduate future leaders of business, government and civil society who manage with integrity and get things done. This is non-negotiable in our community and it starts with your first class at Dalhousie University. So when you submit any work for evaluation in this course or any other, please ensure that you are familiar with your obligations under the Faculty of Management’s Academic Integrity Policies and that you understand where to go for help and advice in living up to our standards. You should be familiar with the Faculty of Management Professor and Student Contract on Academic Integrity, and it is your responsibility to ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

Dalhousie offers many ways to learn about academic writing and presentations so that all members of the University community may acknowledge the intellectual property of others. Knowing how to find, evaluate, select, synthesize and cite information for use in assignments is called being “information literate.” Information literacy is taught by Dalhousie University Librarians in classes and through Dalhousie Libraries’ online Citing & Writing tutorials.

Do not plagiarize any materials for this course. For further guidance on what constitutes plagiarism, how to avoid it, and proper methods for attributing sources, please consult the University Secretariat’s Academic Integrity page.

Please note that Dalhousie subscribes to plagiarism detection software that checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a very serious academic offence that may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie, there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course; students should read the Policy on Academic Dishonesty contained in the Calendar.

Furthermore, the University’s Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student assignments be submitted in both written and computer readable format, e.g.: a text file or as an email attachment, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by the plagiarism detection software. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Use of third-party originality checking software does not preclude instructor use of alternate means to identify lapses in originality and attribution. The result of such assessment may be used as evidence in any disciplinary action taken by the Senate.

Finally: If you suspect cheating by colleagues or lapses in standards by a professor, you may use the confidential email: ManagementIntegrity@dal.ca which is read only by the Assistant Academic Integrity Officer.

**Faculty of Management clarification on plagiarism versus collaboration:**

There are many forms of plagiarism, for instance, copying on exams and assignments. There is a clear line between group work on assignments when explicitly authorised by the professor and copying solutions from others. It is permissible to work on assignments with your friends but only when the professor gives you permission in the specific context of the assignment. University rules clearly stipulate that all assignments should be undertaken individually unless specifically authorised.

Specific examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Copying a computer file from another student, and using it as a template for your own solution
- Copying text written by another student
- Submitting the work of someone else, including that of a tutor as your own

An example of acceptable collaboration includes the following:

- When authorised by the professor, discussing the issues and underlying factors of a case with fellow students, and then each of the students writing up their submissions individually, from start to finish.
UNIVERSITY STATEMENTS

ACCESSIBILITY
The Advising and Access Centre serves as Dalhousie’s Centre for expertise on student accessibility and accommodation. Our work is governed by Dalhousie’s Student Accommodation Policy, to best support the needs of Dalhousie students. Our teams work with students who request accommodation as a result of: disability, religious obligation, an experienced barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Canadian Human Rights legislation.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don’t follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can’t be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality.

Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

RECOGNITION OF MI’KMAQ TERRITORY
Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi’kmaq Territory.

The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the McCain Building (room 3037) or contact the programs at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803 (leave a message).
COURSE OUTLINE

Note: changes to the following outline are subject to the weather and the whim of the instructor.

WEEK 1
8 January

COURSE OVERVIEW
I want you to learn something practical and useful. I want you to be better IMs, no matter what your specific field or career is or will be. I want you to be able to look at a report, cover letter, proposal, or article and be able to ask it intelligent questions so that you know what it is, what it wants to do, and whether it does what it says it does.

I want you to understand that there are many ways to know and understand the world.

I want you to learn by doing. So you can say you did it. And put it on your CV.

THEMES: What is research and why is it important for IM? Introduction to key terms and concepts (ontology, epistemology, methodology, methods) and disciplines (Humanities, Social Sciences, ‘Hard’ Sciences). How to read research.

TO DO: Form groups, establish Seminar YWtL assignments. How to ask questions about research (i.e., evaluation).

READINGS:
This syllabus!

Leedy & Ormrod: Preface, page v, and Chapter 1 (you can skip the section on how to use a word processor…)

WEEK 2
15 January

THEMES: Research Design: the components, what they are, why they are there, and what they look like in the Humanities, Social Sciences, and Hard Sciences. Ethics and rigour. Start: Philosophical underpinnings of research.

Also: What is a Literature Review? What is an Annotated Bibliography? Why aren’t they the same thing?

TO DO: Good literature reviews. Problem, Purpose, Research questions. Start Tri-Agency Ethics CORE Tutorial

READINGS:
Jennifer’s Research Proposal for NURS5100 Qualitative Methods (pdf on Brightspace) For now, read the literature review, and skim the rest, paying attention to what components are included.


Leedy & Ormrod: Chapters 2 & 3
USEFUL LINKS:
Faculty of Management Research Ethics Forms (course-based)
https://www.dal.ca/faculty/management/current-students/research-ethics-forms.html

Dalhousie University Research Ethics
https://www.dal.ca/dept/research-services/responsible-conduct/research-ethics.html

TCPS 2 CORE Tutorial
http://pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/education/tutorial-didacticiel/

WEEK 3
22 January

To paraphrase from Brian Cantwell Smith (2002):
Any given text you come across may not be in a language with which you are familiar or comfortable. That does not mean it has no value to you; assume the person or persons writing it are dedicated and intelligent and that they believe that what they are writing is true. Figure out what inspired them to write this piece and translate the salient points into something you understand. Try to see where those points would lead if the research were to continue.


THEMES: Research in SIM (a.k.a., Faculty Research Night!) Continue: Philosophical underpinnings of research.

TO DO: In-class exercise: Philosophical frameworks in practice.

READINGS:


Leedy & Ormrod, Chapter 4

WEEK 4
29 January

Guest Lecture: Morning Star Padilla, Indigenous Services Librarian, Dalhousie Libraries, will talk about Indigenous research methods, terminology, and resources.

DUE: Literature Review

THEMES: Introduction to Qualitative methods: Grounded Theory, Phenomenology, Narrative Inquiry

TO DO: Discussion of Ethics forms:

READINGS:
Leedy & Ormrod, Chapter 9

WEEK 5
5 February

DUE:

THEMES: Qualitative methods, continued: Ethnographic and Case Studies; Qualitative Observation

TO DO: In-class exercise: Working with photographs (Bring a Photo to Class Day! Topic: “This is graduate student life.”); How to Observe IWB; S3

READINGS:
Leedy & Ormrod, Chapter 9 (continued from previous week); Chapter 10 (optional)


WEEK 6
12 February – IWB
As part of the Observation/Qualitative Description assignment, attend the IWB conference and make observations while in the field. You may take notes (or not! It’s up to you.) Bring your observations to class on the 26th.

WEEK 7 – WINTER BREAK

WEEK 8
26 February
Guest speaker: Alison Brown, MLIS and SIM Alumna, will discuss her MLIS thesis and continuing research in the Read Aloud program for incarcerated mothers at Nova Institute and their children.

DUE: Ethics, including PDF of CORE

THEMES: Qualitative methods, continued: Qualitative Descriptive (Thematic Analysis); Qualitative Data Analysis

TO DO: In-class exercise: Thematic analysis of IWB Observations; S4

READINGS:

Leedy & Ormrod, Chapter 11

WEEK 9
5 March
DUE: Observation/Qualitative Description Assignment

THEMES: Positivism and Post-Positivism Recap; Introduction to Quantitative methods: Descriptive

TO DO: Support Series: Opinio presented by Lindsay McNiff; Survey questions

READINGS:


Leedy & Ormrod, Chapter 6


WEEK 10
12 March

DUE:

THEMES: Quantitative methods, continued: Experimental research; Quantitative Data Analysis

TO DO: In-class exercise: TBA; S6

READINGS:

Leedy & Ormrod, Chapter 7 & 8

WEEK 11
19 March

DUE:

THEMES: Mixed Methods; How to write your proposal (e.g., how to write about data analysis when you don’t have data…) Humanism; Geospatial research methods.

TO DO: Support Series: Posters presented by Lindsay McNiff; draft of poster; S7

READINGS:

Leedy & Ormrod, Chapters 12 & 13
WEEK 12
26 March

DUE:

THEMES: Representing Research: Text, slides, posters, data visualizations

TO DO: S8

READINGS:
TBA

WEEK 13
2 April

DUE: Poster Presentation and Research Proposal. Schedule of presentations TBA