

INFO 5520 Research Methods
Winter 2025

Course Type: Face to face
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

All information professionals require knowledge of formal research processes 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

There are no prerequisites for this course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the conclusion of the course, students will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the research process.
2. Be capable of critically evaluating research.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of qualitative and quantitative research methods.
4. Understand core research ethics principles.
5. Possess an understanding of research in practice in various contexts.
6. Develop a research proposal.
7. Produce a research report.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

None

DESCRIPTION OF CLASS FORMAT

The class will typically include a 60-75 minutes lecture/discussion and 60-75 minutes of hands-on time to work on exercises and assignments.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

Lectures, discussions, exercises.

LEARNING MATERIALS

All learning materials are found on the course Brightspace and the course website.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

See also the [Grading Policy](#).

COMPONENT	DETAILS	DUE DATE	VALUE/WEIGHT
Introduction	Research problem, research purpose, and research questions	2025-02-07	10% (group)
	Literature review		10% (individual)
Research ethics	TCPS 2: CORE-2022 (Course on Research Ethics)	2025-02-14	5% (individual)
	Research ethics application	2025-03-07	20% (group)
Presentation	Oral presentation of your proposal	2025-03-31	10% (group) + 5% (individual)
Proposal	Full research proposal	2025-04-07	30% (group)
Participation	See rubric below	N/A	10% (individual)

PARTICIPATION EVALUATION RUBRIC

CRITERIA	WEIGHTING	INDICATORS
Preparation	40%	The student demonstrates consistent preparation for class
Quality of contributions	40%	The student's comments are relevant and reflect understanding of the course materials. The student contributes meaningfully to group assignments.
Frequency of participation	10%	The student is actively engaged in the class and/or discussions.
Attendance/Punctuality	10%	The student is present and punctual.

INTEGRATION OF [MI Competencies](#)

PROGRAM COMPETENCY	COURSE LEARNING OUTCOME	COURSE ASSESSMENT
Adaptation	1, 3-7	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
Collaboration	1-7	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
Commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and decolonization	1, 3-5	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
Communication	2, 4-7	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
Digital and technological literacy	3, 5-7	Proposal, Presentation
Evidence-based practices	1-7	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation

Leadership	1-7	Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
Learning	1-7	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
Management	1-7	Lit Review, Ethics, Proposal, Presentation
User-centred design	1-7	Ethics, Proposal, Presentation

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance

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

Citation Style

MI 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.

GRADING POLICY

A+	90-100	Demonstrates original work of distinction.
A	85-89	Demonstrates high-level command of the subject matter and an ability for critical analysis.
A-	80-84	Demonstrates above-average command of the subject matter.
B+	77-79	Demonstrates average command of the subject matter.
B	73-76	Demonstrates acceptable command of the subject matter.
B-	70-72	Demonstrates minimally acceptable command of the subject matter.
F	<70	Unacceptable for credit towards a Master's degree.

ACCOMMODATION POLICY FOR STUDENTS

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and

accommodation. The advising team works with students on the Halifax campus who request accommodation as a result of: a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (NS, NB, PEI, NFLD). If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course that result in barriers to your inclusion please contact the Student Accessibility Centre. 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. Visit https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility/accommodations-/classroom-accommodation.html for more details.

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

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 software that checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to support instructors in confirming 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 Intellectual Honesty contained in the Academic 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 to plagiarism detection software. 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 a lapse in academic integrity by colleagues or a professor, you may confidentially share your concerns via DeanManagement@dal.ca.

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

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the [University Calendar](#) and the Senate.

ACCESSIBILITY

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. We work collaboratively with Dalhousie and King's students, faculty, and staff to create an inclusive educational environment for students. The Centre is responsible for administering the university-wide [Student Accommodation Policy](#) working across all programs and faculties.

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).

INTERNATIONALIZATION

At Dalhousie, “thinking and acting globally” enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is “interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders.”

RECOGNITION OF MI'KMAQ TERRITORY

Dalhousie University is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq. We are all Treaty people. For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, or information about alternative territorial acknowledgements if your class is offered outside of Nova Scotia, please visit <https://native-land.ca/>.

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).

FAIR DEALING POLICY

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date of Class	Module	Topic
2025-01-06	Introduction	Course overview, key concepts in research
2025-01-13	Conceptual phase	Literature review
2025-01-20		Research problem and research questions
2025-01-27	Methodological phase	Methodological designs; Research ethics.
2025-02-03		Sampling; operationalizing and measuring abstract concepts.
2025-02-10		Qualitative data collection – observations, interviews, focus groups.
2025-02-17	Reading week – no class	
2025-02-24	Methodological phase (continued)	Quantitative data collection – surveys, structured observations.
2025-03-03	Empirical phase	Data collection
2025-03-10	Analytical phase	Qualitative data analysis
2025-03-17		Descriptive and inferential statistics
2025-03-24	Reporting phase	Principle of effective written, visual and oral presentation of research.
2025-03-31		Presentations