I. COURSE INFORMATION

Information Science Research
Thursday, 3:30pm – 5:50pm r.611
Office hours: Mon: 12:00-12:30pm, 3-3:30pm; Th: 2:30-3:30pm, 6:00-6:30pm (other days/times available by appointment)

II. Instructor Information:
Irene Lopatovska
Email: ilopatov@pratt.edu
GA: Rachel Smiley; rachel.smiley0@gmail.com
Phone: (will be given in class)
Listserv: Pratt’s LMS

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Bulletin Description:
An introduction to research design and methods in information and library science. The course is intended for students with no previous coursework or background in research methods. The objective is to equip students with critical skills for understanding quantitative and qualitative research methods, designing their own studies, using research methods to collect original data, and critiquing published research. Topics include research question development; research design concepts, such as causal inference, sampling, and reliability; research methods, such as surveys, interviews, ethnographies, for original data collection; and critical evaluation of research.

Course Goal(s):
The course aims to introduce students to the foundations of research methodology appropriate for the Library and Information science fields; and to enable students to perform research in their professional careers and well as their more advanced degrees.

Student Learning Objectives:
Through lectures, readings and assignments, student will try to achieve the following objectives:
● Understand the nature of research and its importance in information and library science
● Understand science as a social process through which findings become accepted as knowledge
● Develop foundational research skills
● Develop researchable questions and study designs
● Understand research techniques for collecting original data
● Understand the fundamental logic underlying the major concepts of research methods (e.g., causal relationships, correlations, reliability, validity, etc.)
● Use appropriate methodology for designing a research study
● Use appropriate methodology for collecting original data
● Acquire an introduction to basic data analysis concepts
● Acquire the background needed to read, analyze, understand, and critique research literature

Course Calendar/Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Discussion Topics</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 28</td>
<td>Course Overview</td>
<td>Fusing Research into Practice: The Role of Research Methods Education.</td>
<td>Project introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Assignment Due</td>
<td>Review of assignments’ requirements</td>
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Ch. 2 (The Variety of Research Methods) and Ch. 4 (The Research Chain of Reasoning)  
| 3 Sept 11 | Research Question II: The role of theory in research | Ch. 3 (From Finding to Knowledge)  
Ch. 27 (The Reflective Researcher)  

[1] Video link: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNOR4-9xS_c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DNOR4-9xS_c)


**Research Assignment I due (Research Questions)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
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Ch. 7 (Causal Inference)  
Ch. 8 (Sampling, Representation, and External Validity) |
| 5 Sept 25 | Research Design II: Experimental design, Quasi-experimental, Non-experimental, Cross-sectional, Longitudinal | Ch. 11 (Showing Relationships through Design)  
Ch. 21 (Experimental Methods)  
Ch. 26 (Optimizing Research Effectiveness by Using Mixed Methods)  
<p>| 7 Oct 9 | Discussion and hands-on practice          | Assignment 3 due (Literature Review)                                         |
| 8 Oct 16 | Interview and Focus Groups                 | Assignment 4 due (Survey design)                                            |
|        |                                            | Assignment 2 due (Bibliography and Article Summary)                         |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment Due</th>
<th>Reading/References</th>
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Assignment 5 due (Interview questions) |
| 10 Oct 30 | Assignment 6 due | Ch. 13 (Fieldwork and Observation)  
Ch. 15 (Qualitative Data Analysis)  
Assignment 6 due (Observation) |
Assignment 6 due (Observation) |
| 12 Nov 13 | Qualitative Data Analysis | Ch. 15 (Qualitative Data Analysis)  
Assignment 7 due (Methods) |
Assignment 7 due (Methods) |

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 Nov 27</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>THANKSGIVING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Dec 4</td>
<td>Reporting of results</td>
<td>Ch. 16 (Quality Considerations, Conclusions, and Reporting in Qualitative Research) Working on the Final Project narrative (in class)</td>
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*most of the readings should be done in preparation for lectures; a few readings will be done in class*

**IMPORTANT NOTE FOR FALL 2014:** The syllabus provides the framework for this course and is subject to change. This semester the syllabus will be particularly flexible in order to coordinate readings and research activities necessary to conduct the research project. Research activities will be scheduled as the study unfolds and supporting instructional materials will be added in accordance with its progression, typically on a weekly basis. Updates to the schedule will be communicated in advance.

**IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Textbooks, Readings, and Materials:**


**Suggested Journals:**

Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science
College & Research Libraries
Information Processing and Management
Journal of Education for Library and Information Science
Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (JASIST)
Library and Information Science Research
Library Trends
Reference & User Services Quarterly
Technical Services Quarterly
Research Questions (Assignment 1):  
Come up with 2 research questions related to the research project theme and 1 research question not related to the project. Use personal observations and literature for inspiration. Look for inconsistencies and gaps in prior research, analyze personal information use habits and ask how they can be improved. Be prepared to explain the inspiration and rationale for your questions (e.g., why are they interesting/important, what would be the implications/significance/benefits of the study that would try to address these questions, what kind of data would you need to address these questions?). Prepare and submit via email attachment a 1 page write-up and be ready to discuss this assignment in class.

Bibliography and Article Summary (Assignment 2):  
Compile a bibliography of 5 sources (articles and/or books) related to the research project theme. Write a detailed summary of one of the articles (300 words max). [link to the shared document: https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B3ArEzFA7M7sem04cVdZeDJOLX/edit?usp=sharing]

Literature Review (Assignment 3):  
Prepare a literature review section for a potential publication. The review should focus on a research project theme and include 5-15 sources. The literature review should synthesize reviewed studies and identify common and unique research themes and findings, as well as provide sufficient information about previous research. The section should include discussion of the gaps/limitations in the previous studies that you will address in your project. This assignment can be done in teams or individually. Details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

Survey design (Assignment 4):  
Design 10-15 survey items/questions that will help to address study’s research questions/themes. Be prepared to share your questions with instructor and teammates in class (e.g., copies, presentation). The best questions will be selected and refined for the use in a project.

Interview questions (Assignment 5):  
Each student will have to prepare a list of 5-10 questions for the interview with study participants. Your deliverable should include the list of questions, justification for question inclusion and wording. Details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

Observation (Assignment 6):  
Each student will conduct an observation session in a specified setting and take notes about the surroundings, observed interactions, and activities. The deliverable will include structured notes and a brief summary of major findings. Details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

NOTE for Assignments 4-6: a project or a client might require different data collection methods and the three assignments are subject to change.

Methods Section (Assignment 7):  
Prepare a methods section for a potential publication. Include research questions and justification for conducting the study; describe how your research questions will be addressed (what are the data collection instruments and data analysis methods you used (or plan to use) in the study?) This assignment can be done in teams or individually. Details of the assignment will be discussed in class.

Final paper:  
The final paper should include Introduction, Literature Review, and Methods sections of a potential publication. For this paper, you can re-use previous assignments submitted for the class as long as they address instructor’s feedback and present a cohesive narrative. This assignment will include 2 deliverables: a written paper emailed to the instructor no later than the specified due date and an oral presentation of the three sections to your peers. Details of this assignment will be discussed in class.

SILS E-Portfolio
Starting fall 2012, all students entering the MSLIS degree program are required to complete an e-portfolio that must be approved by their advisor before they will be permitted to graduate. The e-portfolio provides students with an opportunity to showcase their best work from the courses they have taken at SILS, and an opportunity to demonstrate they have met the learning objectives of a Master of Information and Library Science. Work completed for this course may be included in the e-portfolio. Students must demonstrate that their work fulfills at least one of the following learning outcomes:

1. Students carry-out and apply research.
2. Students demonstrate excellent communication skills and create and convey content.
3. Students use information technology and digital tools effectively.
4. Students apply concepts related to use and users of information and user needs and perspectives.
5. Students perform within the framework of professional practice.

Detailed information on the learning outcomes, requirements and how to create your e-portfolio is available from: http://www.pratt.edu/academics/information_and_library_sciences/about_sils/sils_eportfolio/

Class discussions: You are expected to read all the assigned readings and actively participate in all the class discussions. Remember, a large percent of your grade is your class participation!

NOTE REGARDING WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: all written assignments should be single-spaced. The number of pages is a recommendation, not a strict requirement (e.g., your paper can be longer or shorter than suggested in the assignment description.)

FACULTY RESEARCH: please note that your class participation, including your assignments, can be used for research. If you want to opt out, notify the instructor

Assessment and Grading:
Student conduct and grading
All assignments must be completed to receive a passing grade in the course.

Assignments must be submitted on time, so that they can be graded consistently and discussed in the class session following the due date. Put the date of submission on the cover page as well as your name, the course number, and the title of the assignment.

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMAIL TO THE INSTRUCTOR [UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED]. DO NOT USE PDF FILES UNLESS REQUESTED BY INSTRUCTOR. THE SUBJECT LINE OF YOUR EMAIL SHOULD CONTAIN THE COURSE NUMBER AND ASSIGNMENT’S TITLE.

Except for documented medical and family emergencies, assignments submitted late will receive a lower grade for the following reasons:
(a) students who take more time to prepare their assignments have an unfair advantage over their classmates; (b) students who submit their assignments late often benefit from the review in class of their colleagues’ errors.

Late papers will receive a grade but no comments.

Participation
We will be discussing readings and assignments in class. You should be prepared to discuss and/or ask and answer questions based on the readings or exercises. **The higher and more substantive participation the higher the grade!**

Missing classes
When you have to miss a class, please, notify the instructor and submit a 1 page summary of an article/chapter that you have read for the missed class.

*Students with 3 absences (for any reason, including documented medical reasons) cannot expect to receive an A in the course

*Students with 4 absences or more will be asked to drop the course

Email communication
Please, include class number (LIS 630) in all your class related correspondence. Try to be courteous and professional and ALWAYS include your name in the body of the message.

ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY VIA EMAIL

Format
It is important to follow consistent format for all your assignments. The suggested format is APA [the course bibliography is an example of the APA style]:


All written assignments must have the following information in the top left corner of the front page:
student's name
course number
assignment or exercise number as listed in the Syllabus

If references to other works (articles, books...) are included in the summary, they must be properly cited in the summary, e.g. Tenopir (2004).

Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>F</td>
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For details on Pratt Institute grading system please refer to the *Graduate Bulletin*.

Grades for students’ work will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Assignment 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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III. POLICIES

Institute-wide policies listed in the “Community Standards” section of the bulletin:
Students must adhere to all Pratt Institute policies listed in the Pratt Student Handbook under “Student Affairs,” which include policies on attendance, academic integrity, plagiarism, and computer and network use. Full descriptions of these policies are available in the Online Student Handbook at:

Policy on students with disabilities:

Anyone requiring special accommodations for disabilities must obtain clearance from the Office of Disability Services at the beginning of the semester. Contact Mai McDonald, Director of Disability Services at: mcdonald@pratt.edu or by phone at (718) 636-3711.

Complete documentation of office’s policies and services can be found in the Online Student Handbook at:
http://www.pratt.edu/uploads/Online_Student_Handbook.pdf and at: