

## **INSC 310: Information Seeking: Resources and Strategies**

**Fall 2018**

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**Time:** Online Asynchronous

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Building

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**Office Hours:** By Appointment.

**Contact Instructions:** Put INSC 310 at the start of the subject line with a description of what you need. For example "INSC 310\_Question about Week 3" or "INSC 310\_Setting up an appointment."

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will develop students' abilities to design a research project and to locate and evaluate information throughout the research process. These skills are useful for students in all majors and especially useful to those who must complete a research project or who are planning to engage in research in future school programs. In addition, these skills can be applied in everyday life and on-the-job situations. In the world of easily available information, especially on the Internet, it is important to understand how the information we gather is a direct result of the way we search and how we evaluate the available sources we find.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the research process in order to properly define a research task.

2. Identify and locate appropriate information resources in relation to particular research interests.
3. Evaluate information for quality and appropriateness.
4. Be familiar with basic terminology associated with research, information technology and information retrieval.
5. Understand the current online and offline information environment.
6. Develop personal strategies for gathering information in a particular area of study or interest.

### **ABOUT THE COURSE:**

INSC 310 is delivered as an asynchronous online course, which means that each student will access each week's pre-recorded class sessions at a time of his or her choosing, during the course of that week. Online courses prepare students for future experiences in the 21st century workplace, in which online learn-on-demand courses are often used for continuing education, advanced certification, and professional development courses. By taking this class, you will be gaining both greater flexibility in managing your time, and valuable experience with this alternative learning environment. UT SIS has successfully used distance education to deliver graduate classes for many years, and began offering undergraduate online courses in Fall 2009. It is important to recognize that taking an asynchronous online course is different from a traditional class, or even a synchronous DE class, where everyone attends online at the same time. There are a few simple guidelines to follow (listed below), which will ensure that you have a successful experience. I promise you that I will uphold my responsibility to provide you with the same high level of support, access, and communication that you would want to have in a traditional classroom setting.

The course is structured to make it a rewarding learning experience that will also have meaning for you both for your subsequent education, and in your future professional life. In some aspects, your part of the bargain is the same

as it would be for a traditional class. I expect you to demonstrate critical thinking skills as well as commitment and involvement with our online discussions and your assignments. Learning is not a passive process; it is about a student's actively engaging the material through reading, thinking, discussing (online), questioning, practicing skills, and ultimately understanding. Bring your best efforts, a positive outlook, energy, and curiosity to each of the class sessions. Together we can make the class as interesting, relevant, and exciting as possible.

### **ONLINE COURSE SUCCESS GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS:**

*Accept that you must be more self-reliant in an online class:* Although students are always responsible for knowing everything in the syllabus and complying with the requirements of a course, this is especially true for an online course. Students are expected to show self-initiative, to make good time management decisions, and to be especially proactive in contacting the instructor when they are having problems, or don't understand something.

*Keep up with the weekly schedule outlined below:* Enjoy attending class at 2am in your pajamas, or from a location half way across the world, if you wish, but don't abuse the schedule flexibility by falling behind, just because the class doesn't meet at the same times each week. **THE SINGLE BIGGEST MISTAKE ONLINE STUDENTS CAN MAKE IS TO PUT OFF VIEWING THE CLASSES AND ALLOW THE ATTENDANCE AND ASSIGNMENTS TO PILE UP.**

*Put extra effort into all opportunities for interaction with your classmates and instructor:* We will be using the online blog tool, and other electronic means to interact as a class. Many students are very comfortable with interacting through electronic media like Facebook, but whether you are or not, believe me- we can have meaningful discussions, and question and answer sessions, even though we will not be together at the same time, as long as you do your part to participate.

### **CONTACTING ME**

Feel free to ask questions or share ideas.

You are encouraged to drop in during office hours, or we can set up an appointment at another time that is more convenient for you.

I check e-mail on a regular basis, even when I am traveling. Ask a question via e-mail when it's fresh on your mind – I'll try to answer within 72 hours, but I may get back to you even faster. Please put INSC 310 in the subject heading of your message so that it is easier for me to find among the hordes of email I get each day!

## **COURSE COMMUNICATIONS**

To take this course, you must have access to a computer with high speed Internet access, and you must use a UTK email account. You may use your own personal computer, or you may use the computers available in the various campus libraries or computer labs. If you are using your personal computer, be sure that you are running the latest version of Java by going to [java.com](http://java.com) and using the update button; this is free to do and will make sure that the applications run effectively for you.

UT's Office of Information Technology implemented different software to deliver online courses at UT, called Zoom. Whether you are an experienced online student, or you have never had an online class before (here or elsewhere), be assured that you will be able to easily and conveniently access the course sessions, and any tech glitches that may pop up can be successfully solved. I will provide specific access instructions when the first class is released. I have also included a "lectures" button in the course menu bar that will take you to the same place. Each lecture will be labeled with the topic and Lecture 1, Lecture 2, etc. The session will be available as an audio recording, illustrated by the PowerPoint slides or other visual aids, and may also include a visual of the instructor. The recorded class sessions can be accessed online, or downloaded to your personal computer, so you can

attend class even when you aren't actually online. This is true whether you use a PC or Mac platform.

The Canvas Learn (Online @ UT) program will also be used for many course management tasks. We will use interaction tools such as discussion boards. PowerPoint presentations from the class sessions will be posted under the appropriate weekly module. All Assignments and the Tests will be administered through the Canvas Course site. Canvas is available at <http://online.utk.edu> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site..

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Do all assigned reading prior to attending each class session.** The lecture will assume that you know the information that is in the readings, and will build upon it.
- **Complete all assignments** and submit them on time, using the format and procedure specified by the instructor.
- **Check your e-mail and Canvas regularly.** I will use email to return assignments, solicit student input, and make clarifications. Canvas will also be used for announcements and the discussion board, blogs, and other interactive activities.
- **Participate actively in the class by giving your best effort to the interactive activities** using the discussion tool. In addition, treat your colleagues with courtesy and respect by reading and reflecting on their online comments, and responding to them appropriately.
- **Timely online attendance is required.** The course schedule below lists which class sessions you should complete at your convenience during each week. It is essential that you keep up by attending the sessions in the proper week, so that you can complete assignments and exams as scheduled. Canvas provides statistics about whether or not a student has

"attended" a recorded class session, which allows me to "take roll" just as I would in a traditional class.

## **REQUIRED READINGS**

**Check Canvas weekly for a list of required readings.**

### **Textbook**

Badke, W. (2014). *Research strategies: Finding your way through the information fog* (6th Edition) Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, Inc. ISBN : 978 -1-53201803-9

### **Recommended**

APA Guide (recommended) American Psychological Association. (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. ISBN: 978-1-4338-0561-5

Hacker, D., & N. Sommers. (2014). *A pocket style manual* (7th ed.). Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's.

### **Additional articles/excerpts**

There will be additional readings for this class and I encourage you to read widely and recommend interesting readings to the class. The added readings will reflect the personal interests of class members.

## **STUDENT EVALUATION (SEE THE CLASS SCHEDULE FOR ALL DUE DATES)**

Evaluation is based on performance for each of the responsibilities listed above. The final grade is based on the following assignments; you must complete them to earn a grade in this class.

Item	% of total grade	Total Points Possible		
			A	94-100% of possible points
Weekly Quizzes	5%	50	A-	88-93
Discussion Questions	5%	50	B+	85-87
			B	82-84
4 Individual Assignments	40%	400 (100 each)	B-	78-81
			C+	75-77
Final Project	40%	400	C	72-74
Attendance & participation	10%	100	C-	68-71
			D	58-67
TOTAL	100%	1000	F	58 or below

**Discussion Questions:** Throughout the term you will write a brief response to an assigned question. These questions will not require you to do further reading or research; the answers will be either asking for your opinion related to something you will already have read or done, or a reflection based on your own experiences, or a thought-provoking exercise in creative problem solving. Your Discussion Question answers will be posted to the comment section of the blog post created for each question. **Note: They must be completed by their due dates. No late submissions will be allowed.**

**Individual Assignments:** There will be 4 assignments during the semester. The student will thoroughly address questions given in class or via online instruction concerning the current readings. Additional details and instructions will be provided in the class lectures.

### Final Project

For the Final Project you will propose a research question that relates to your chosen field of study or an area that is of interest to you, and create an annotated bibliography of a variety of types of resources that are relevant to the research question.

**The Final Project is due December 12th and is worth 400 points. This is the largest single assignment for the semester. More details about this assignment will be posted on Canvas later in the semester.**

## **Course Policies**

### **Assignment Submission**

Unless otherwise specified, all assignments should be typed, double-spaced, and in a 12-point font, with reasonable margins. Please include your name, date, course number, and appropriate pagination. Submit the assignments via Canvas, unless instructed to do otherwise.

### **Late Assignments**

- **Late assignments will carry a 20 point deduction PER DAY.**
- **Please do not send last minute emails asking for extensions** on assignments as all assignments coming up are indicated on the syllabus. On the Canvas course site there is an Assignment Due Dates document under the Assignments tab indicating the due dates for all assignments in this course and on the checklist.
- Discussion question links will continue to be available so that you can see the responses of others and make comments, but **late discussion questions will not count for credit.**
- Canvas does provide the date and time for every assignment submitted and every post made on the discussion forum for the thought questions.

### **Class Participation: Interactive Activities**

In our course environment, class participation will occur using the interactive tools available on the Canvas site. The Discussion Board allows both the instructor and class members to pose and answer questions, and to share thoughts or ideas with the group. Online communication and even the use of social networking applications are becoming essential parts of the professional and academic environment. Here are some ideas of how you can be involved in our online conversation:

- You can post questions to the discussion boards based on what we have read.
- You can share items from the news or even your own experiences (both successful and frustrating) from working in organizations that relate to topics covered in class.
- You can let your colleagues know about helpful web resources that you find, that relate to topics covered in class.
- You will be asked to use the blog tool to respond to in-class activities.

This portion of your grade will be based on your *efforts to join* the interactive online conversations. If your contributions exhibit both quality of thought and frequent participation, you will earn top points for this aspect of your grade.

### **Academic Integrity**

Please refer to *Hilltopics Student Handbook*. It can be accessed at: <http://web.utk.edu/~homepage/hilltopics> (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#) or a print copy obtained in Student Services or the Registrar's office.

*"The responsibility for learning is an individual matter. Study, preparation and presentation should involve at all times the student's own work, unless it has been clearly specified that work is to be a team effort. Academic honesty requires that all work presented be the student's own work, not only on tests, but in themes, papers, homework, and class presentation."*

Cheating, plagiarism, providing unauthorized help and other acts of dishonesty violate the rule of academic honesty; the offender will be subject to penalties as set forth in *Hilltopics*. The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software, such as Turn It In.

**FAILING THE COURSE:** A student may fail the course if s/he does not complete assignments or meet expectations for assignments as outlined in the syllabus. Also, failing to turn in the final project will result in course failure.

### **CCI Diversity Statement (CCI BYLAWS, SECTION II-C)**

#### CCI Diversity Statement

"CCI recognizes and values diversity. Exposing students to diverse people, ideas and cultures increases opportunities for intellectual inquiry, encourages critical thinking, and enhances communication and information competence. When all viewpoints are heard, thoughtfully considered, and respectfully responded to, everyone benefits. Diversity and fairness unite us with the wider professional and global community." (see <http://www.cci.utk.edu/diversity-statement> for CCI's full Diversity Statement).

**Additionally**, class rosters and University data systems are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name and gender identification. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

#### **UT ODS Disability Statement**

"Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 865-974-6087 in 100 Dunford Hall to document their eligibility for services. ODS will work with students and faculty to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities."

Additionally, class rosters and University data systems are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name and gender identification. I will gladly honor your request to address you by a preferred name and/or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

## **Course Schedule**

Please see Canvas for the details of each week.

This course is broken into six parts. They are as follows.

### **Part One – Introductions**

In this section we will get to know each other.

### **Part Two – Background Research and Research Questions**

In this section we will cover conducting background research and formulating research questions.

### **Part Three – Searching and Evaluating Sources**

This section will cover finding and evaluating sources.

### **Part Four – APA Style**

This section is on APA style and how to use it.

### **Part Five – Summarizing and Paraphrasing**

This section will cover how to summarize and paraphrase research.

### **Part Six – Final Project and Final Exam**

This section is at the end of the term and includes your final exam and the final project.

Because the course is undergoing a reorganization readings, quizzes, and assignments are in flux and therefore will be available on Canvas.

