



DEPARTMENT OF
INFORMATION SCIENCE
College of Information

Course Number: INFO 4080

**Course Title: Research Methods and
Evaluation**

Course Section(s): 401

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SYLLABUS

Spring, 2026

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COURSE INFORMATION

- Course Name: INFO 4080
- Course Title: Research Methods and Evaluation
- Course Section(s): 401
- Credit Hours: 3 Hours
- Class Meeting: Online
- Course Pre-requisites: None
- Course Format: Online

Instructor's Contact Information

- Name: Agnes Pearcy
- Title: Dr.
- Phone number: 703-209-1669
- UNT Email: Agnes.Pearcy@unt.edu
- Office hours (by appointment): Wednesdays and Fridays, 1-2 PM (CT)

Communicating with Your Instructor

- For purposes of communicating about course-related concerns/questions, please use the Main Discussion in Canvas. With personal questions or concerns, please contact me via the Canvas Message feature or email me at my UNT email address.
- If, for some reason, the Canvas system is not available, you can use my individual UNT email addresses.
- I try to respond to course messages and email in a very timely manner. Except on the weekends, I'll respond to your messages and emails within 24 hours.
- Feedback on assignments usually occur within the week after you submitted them. Typically, that is the time frame for posting grades as well.

Course Description

Research principles and techniques; role of theories and hypotheses; experimental and non-experimental research; measurement and data collection; analysis and interpretation; quantitative methods and applications; problems in formulating research proposals and evaluating representative studies.

- *Course Goals: The primary purpose of the course is to provide students with the knowledge necessary to comprehend, evaluate, and utilize research reports. The course also prepares students to undertake research projects in the library and information science fields.*

- *Learning Objectives/Outcomes/Goals:*

Module 1:

Given a research report, categorize the major constructs in the report as to the parts of a research report.

Explain the characteristics of the constructs not covered in the report.

State in own words the definition of the constructs found in a research report.

Describe each step in the research sequence.

Module 2:

Describe the purpose of the types of research covered (Experimental, Ex-Post-Facto, Survey, Historical, and Qualitative).

Compare and contrast the steps covered in the types of research covered.

Critique the philosophy of research (quantitative/positivist vs. qualitative/constructivists) reflected by a given research approach.

Describe and compare two classical experimental research designs.

Define internal validity and be able to evaluate the internal validity of a given research design.

Differentiate between true experimental and Ex-Post-Facto research.

Describe advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires and critique questionnaire items.

Describe a Likert-type scale and practice the procedure for constructing fixed response scales in general.

Compare the advantages and disadvantages of interviews.

Assess the continuum of choices for survey research.

Describe the reasons for using a qualitative research approach.

Describe the three data gathering approaches used in qualitative research.

Describe the problems with historical research.

Evaluate the sources of data in historical research.

Discuss the types of criticism in historical research.

Describe the basic assumptions underlying qualitative research and the strengths and weaknesses.

Module 3, Part 1:

Distinguish between descriptive and inferential statistics and give examples of each.

Given a list of descriptions of data, the student will categorize each as to type.

Given a display of raw data, the student will construct a histogram and a frequency polygon.

Given a set of data, the student will use a statistical package to calculate the mean, mode, and median.

Given 2 frequency distributions, the student will analyze each as to, dispersion, central tendency, and skewness.

The student will define and calculate standard deviation using a computer statistical package.

Given a normally distributed group of data the student will identify areas under the curve; find z scores, and percentages.

Module 3, Part 2:

The student will define regression lines and identify various types of regression lines.

Given a correlation coefficient, the student will discuss the meaning in terms of significance, directionality, and power.

Describe the concept of a null hypothesis.

Describe and carry out the steps in hypothesis testing.

Describe Type I and Type II errors.

Calculate and analyze two types of chi-square tests.

Given the outcome of a test of significance of a difference between the means of two groups, (independent) the student will analyze the findings.

Given the outcome of a test of significance of the correlation coefficient, the student will analyze the findings.

Given the raw data for several variables within a sample, the student will answer questions regarding the population from which the sample was drawn by creating hypotheses, utilizing a computer to calculate the statistics, and interpreting the results.

Create a research study that analyzes a public or academic library's service pattern compared to the demographics of the service area.

Module 4:

Given a research report,

1. *Describe the report in detail*
2. *Evaluate it using the course content in the previous modules.*
3. *Compose an evaluation document.*
4. *Compose a recommendation to a potential user of the report as to appropriateness and value.*

Course Outcomes: Given a research report, students will be able to describe the report in detail, evaluate it, and make a recommendation to a potential user of the report as to appropriateness and value. Students will be able to undertake research projects in the library and information science fields.

Materials

All course materials are available online within the class via the Canvas learning management system.

Teaching Philosophy

Online courses provide an ideal setting for balancing all learning styles and a safe and highly interactive classroom environment that empowers students and gives them voice. The more active the students, the more likely they are to benefit from peer-to-peer learning by enriching the course material with personal experiences and knowledge. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and, in doing so, enhance the integration of new knowledge. In order to best benefit from this course, students should take advantage of the small group discussions of the intra-module assignments and the self-tests. Students are also highly encouraged to communicate any problems or concerns with their instructor. The instructor will provide clear instructions for projects and assessments, answer questions about assignments in a timely manner, identify additional resources as necessary, and review and update the course content as needed.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

The UNT University Information Technology provides student IT services and technical support, including Canvas.

- UIT Homepage: <https://it.unt.edu/uit>
- Email: helpdesk@unt.edu
- Phone: 940.565.2324
- In Person: Sage Hall, Room 330

Canvas technical requirements: <https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements>

Hardware or software requirements: Basic computer with reliable Internet access. Word processor and MS Excel.

Minimum Technical Skills Needed

At the undergraduate level course, students are expected to have the following technology skills to fully participate in learning. Students should be able to use the learning management system (Canvas) to access course related materials and resource, keep up with emails regularly, create, modify or submit files according to instructors direction, such as proper file format, be able to download and install software when needed, and utilize the basics of the Microsoft Suite (Word, Excel, Power Point.)]

Success in the Online Course

The two most important factors for success in an online class is (1) to keep a calendar and pay attention to assignment due dates, and (2) to reach out to your instructor and/or to your peers to ask for assistance. Please also read *“How to Succeed as an Online Student”*.

Student Academic Support Services

- [Code of Student Conduct](#): provides Code of Student Conduct along with other useful links
- [Office of Disability Access](#): exists to prevent discrimination based on disability and to help students reach a higher level of independence
- [Counseling and Testing Services](#): provides counseling services to the UNT community, as well as testing services; such as admissions testing, computer-based testing, career testing, and other tests
- [UNT Libraries](#)
- [UNT Learning Center](#): provides a variety of services, including tutoring, to enhance the student academic experience
- [UNT Writing Center](#): offers free writing tutoring to all UNT students, undergraduate and graduate, including online tutoring
- [Succeed at UNT](#): information regarding how to be a successful student at UNT

COURSE MODULES, TOPICS AND LECTURES

INFO 4080 is organized into 4 Learning Modules (Note: Module 3 has two parts.):

- Module 1: General Organization of Research
- Module 2: Types of Research
- Module 3: Statistical Methods
 - Part 1: Descriptive Statistics
 - Part 2: Inferential Statistics
- Module 4: Evaluating Research Reports

ASSESSMENT & GRADING

Assignments and Assessments

Assignments:

Organization of Research Assignment (Due: January 30, 2026). Identifying parts of research reports.

Types of Research Assignment (Due: February 21, 2026). Evaluate questionnaires and answer questions about research articles.

Descriptive Statistics Assignment (Due: March 19, 2026). Based upon past circulation statistics, make recommendations on changing circulation period.

Inferential Statistics Assignment (Due: April 6, 2026). Make recommendations to management regarding use of various information sources and the provision of training.

Exams:

Midterm Exam (Due: March 23, 2026) Online test on Modules 1, 2, and 3, Part 1.

Projects:

Evaluation of Research Report – Final Exam (Due: May 1, 2026). The student will describe and completely critique a research report utilizing the information presented in the course. (Note: This is the Final Exam for the course.)

Public Library Use Research Project (Due: May 4, 2026). – Extra Credit

In a group, students will carry out a research project in a local library to determine whether the use of the library by gender matches the population served. They will also perform an internal and external validity analysis of their project

Grading

Grading Table

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Points Possible</i>	<i>Percentage of Final Grade</i>
<i>Module 1 Assignment 1</i>	<i>17 points</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Module 2 Questions A & B</i>	<i>22 points</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Module 3 Part 1 Assignment</i>	<i>9 points</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Module 3 Part 2 Assignment</i>	<i>16 points</i>	<i>12%</i>
<i>Midterm Exam</i>	<i>76 points</i>	<i>25%</i>
<i>Research Report Evaluation (Final Exam)</i>	<i>25 points</i>	<i>27%</i>
<i>Total Points Possible</i>	<i>165 points</i>	<i>100%</i>
<i>Public Library Use Research Project (Extra Credit)</i>	<i>+15 points</i>	<i>15%</i>

Total Points Possible for Semester/Grading Scale = 100

$$100-90 = A$$

89-80 = B
79-70 = C
69-60 = D
59-50 = F

CALENDAR

Calendar

Topics	Activity	Due Date	Points
Module 1: Organization of Research	Complete the <i>Module 1 Assignment</i> and take the quiz	January 30, 2026	17 points (10% of your final grade)
Module 2: Types of Research	Complete the <i>Module 2 Assignment: Questions A & B</i> and take the quizzes	February 21, 2026	22 points (10% of your final grade)
Module 3/Part 1: Descriptive Statistics	Complete the <i>Descriptive Statistics Assignment</i> and take the quiz	March 19, 2026	9 points (10% of your final grade)
Midterm Exam	Review Modules 1,2, & 3/Part 1	March 23, 2026	76 points (20% of your final grade)
Module 3/Part 2: Inferential Statistics	Complete the <i>Inferential Statistics Assignment</i> and take the quiz	April 6, 2026	16 points (10% of your final grade)
Module 4: Evaluating Research Reports	<i>Research Report Evaluation</i> (Final Exam)	May 1, 2026	25 points (25% of your final grade)
<i>Public Library Research Project (Optional – Extra Credit)</i>	Team Project for Extra Credit	May 4, 2026	15 points (Extra Credit)

Final Examination:

Date, time, and place of final examination: The final exam is a research report evaluation. Students will receive a research article via email (in Canvas) on *April 25, 2026*, and they will have up to 6 days to write and electronically submit their article evaluation. **Due date: May 1, 2026, 11:59 PM (Central Time).**

COURSE EVALUATION

Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) is the student evaluation system for UNT, implemented in summer 2015, to comply with the State of Texas House Bill 2504. Each semester student will receive an email from UNT to their student UNT email to response to the anonymous survey. For more information, visit Office of the Provost, SPOT page: <https://vpaa.unt.edu/spot>

COURSE POLICIES

Assignment Policy

Official due dates for each assignment are posted in the Canvas course calendar and in the Syllabus section of the course. Students will find assignment instructions under “Modules” and “Introduction to the Course” in Canvas.

Students can earn extra credit by completing the Public Library Use Research Project.

The University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Examination Policy

All online quizzes and the midterm exam are open-book tests. In case of any technical problems during an online exam, students should contact the Student Helpdesk and document the remedy ticket number before contacting the instructor.

Instructor Responsibilities and Feedback

- Instructor responsibilities include providing clear instructions for projects and assessments, answering questions about assignments, identifying additional resources as necessary, reviewing and updating course content as needed.
- Feedback on assignments and grades will be posted within a week after submission.

Late Work and Missed Work

Written assignments posted more than four days after the deadline will be considered for grading only if extenuating circumstances exist. The assignment may be accepted with proper documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Students need to contact the instructor within 24 hours of the due date of an assignment if there is to be some consideration for an extension. Please note that one doctor's note doesn't excuse future late assignments.

Course Incomplete Grade

An incomplete for the course can be assigned in accordance with the UNT policy on incompletes: <https://registrar.unt.edu/grades/incompletes>

Attendance Policy

This is an online class. Regular (weekly) login to the class (Canvas) is necessary for a successful completion of the course.

COVID-19 Impact on Attendance

While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact me if you are unable to participate in the class because you are ill, or unable to complete assignments due to a related issue regarding COVID-19. It is important that you communicate with me prior to the due dates so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be granted an extension on the deadlines.

Class Participation

Participation in specific team assignments and the timely completion of assignments are required.

Students' Responsibility for Their Learning

Students are responsible for their own learning, submitting their assignments on time, and communicating with their instructor regarding any questions or concerns about the course content and the class organization.

Syllabus Change Policy

Any changes to policies regarding changes to the syllabus, course information, and due dates will be posted to the class announcements.

UNT POLICIES

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

The Student Standards of Academic Integrity (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>) defines six categories of academic dishonesty: cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, and sabotage. The category **plagiarism** defined as follows: "Use of another's thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise, regardless of the student's intent, including but not limited to:

- 1) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation.
- 2) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials." (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>)

DIS instructors will impose the following academic penalties for violations of the DIS Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy:

First Offense: 0 for the assignment.

Second Offense: F (fail) for the course, entered in the gradebook.

Per UNT Policy 06.003, the course instructor retains the right to determine specific sanctions for their course and to set additional policies and procedures that do not conflict with DIS or UNT policies.

ADA Policy

UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one's specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Course Safety Procedures (for Laboratory Courses)

Students enrolled in INFO 4080 are required to use proper safety procedures and guidelines as outlined in UNT Policy 06.038 Safety in Instructional Activities. While working in laboratory sessions, students are expected and required to identify and use proper safety guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that the UNT is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider Standard Syllabus Statements Related Policy 06.049 Course Syllabi Requirements obtaining Student Health Insurance. Brochures for student insurance are available in the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the Student Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If students have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, they should be sure that the plan covers treatment at this facility. If students choose not to go to the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center, they may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. Students are responsible for expenses incurred there.

Emergency Notification & Procedures

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Optional UNT Policies Statements

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Acceptable Student Behavior

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail: eagleconnect.unt.edu/

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website at <http://spot.unt.edu/> or email spot@unt.edu.

Sexual Assault Prevention

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies

prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Download the UNT System Permission, Waiver and Release Form

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

Class Recordings & Student Likenesses

Synchronous (live) sessions in this course will be recorded for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. Class recordings are the intellectual property of the university or instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website at <http://www.ecfr.gov/>. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f) (6) (i) (G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course. If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](#).