INFO 6660 READINGS IN INFORMATION SCIENCE / IS PhD Program Qualifying Examination:
Spring 2021 Syllabus
(last updated Jan 8, 2021)

Contact Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor/student's committee chair</th>
<th>Dr. Barbara Schultz-Jones</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office</td>
<td>Discovery Park E297N</td>
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<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Barbara.Schultz-Jones@unt.edu">Barbara.Schultz-Jones@unt.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone/Voicemail</td>
<td>940-369-8081</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Meetings</th>
<th>Weekly or bi-weekly meetings with instructor: face-to-face or online via Zoom</th>
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<td>1 (one) meetings with instructor and entire dissertation committee (see the schedule below): face-to-face oral qualifying examination</td>
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| Student's committee members:       | Dr. Sarah Evans, Dr. Shawne Miksa |

Course Description

3 graduate credit hours. Readings in a defined area of information science related to the student’s research interest and areas of specialization. Requires the selection and critical evaluation of highly relevant sources with particular emphasis on research problem, methodological and theoretical issues.

Prerequisite(s): This course is intended for students of Information Science (IS) Ph.D. program and is to be taken in conjunction with the qualifying examination in the last semester of course work, with the student’s major professor. Prior to registering for INFO 6660, a student must have:

- completed all other required core and methods courses with the course grades of either A or B
- successfully completed a total of at least 42 graduate credit hours of the IS Ph.D. Program (at least 54 graduate credit hours of the 72-hour program option)
- officially designated a dissertation committee by completing and submitting to IS Ph.D. Program Office (ci-iisphd@unt.edu) the Committee Designation Form found at http://informationscience.unt.edu/advisors-committees-and-defenses.

Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to strengthen students’ understanding of research process and its components and skills in planning research projects, and to prepare for dissertation research.

By the end of the course, students should develop an ability to prepare a viable research proposal grounded in Information Science:
• define a topic for dissertation, formulate problem statement and research questions and address significance of proposed research

• conduct in-depth review of literature for research proposal, including:
  o identification and critical evaluation of authoritative research papers
  o identification and critical evaluation of models, frameworks, theories
  o identification of research gaps

• present and justify appropriate methodology for investigating the research questions (including considerations of validity and reliability, limitations of proposed research, etc.).

Course Activities and Evaluation

The course activities will include the following:

• **Written Report in the Form of Pre-Proposal (50% of semester grade)**
  Each student will identify a research topic relevant to student’s specialization, and prepare a written report to be submitted to instructor and committee members via the course Canvas site. The report should include the following:
  o a research topic, a problem statement and research question(s)
  o an in-depth literature review of the relevant literature grounded in Information Science, which should include review of the following kinds of resources:
    ▪ those discussing the problem(s)
    ▪ those discussing methodology for the study of the problem(s)
    ▪ those reporting the results of research into the problem(s): identify top 5 relevant research papers
  o a discussion of existing model(s), theory(-ies), and/or framework(s) applicable to the study
  o theoretical justification and description of a theory or model, description of methods appropriate for researching the topic and answering the research questions, including:
    ▪ selection and justification of research approach
    ▪ proposed data collection, sampling, and data analysis technique(s),
    ▪ discussion of validity and reliability of proposed methodology and its limitations
    ▪ discussion of significance of the proposed study.

• **Oral Qualifying Examination (35% of semester grade)**
  Each student will meet with entire dissertation committee to present and discuss the topic and methodology and to provide critique to the 5 top most relevant research papers on the topic.

• **Participation (15% of semester grade)**
  Each student is required to meet with course instructor (major professor) regularly, on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, to report preliminary results of the work on the written report and receive feedback.

The semester schedule is included below.
INFO 6660 Semester Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course activities and deliverables</th>
<th>Deadlines</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 1: discussion of topic and research problems</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 2: discussion of literature review section draft</td>
<td>Jan. 25, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 3: discussion of methodology section draft</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 4: submission of finalized written report assignment (a.k.a. written qualifying exam)</td>
<td>Feb. 8, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>via Turnitin Dropbox in Canvas</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 5: set up oral qualifying examination date with IS PhD Program Office</td>
<td>Feb. 22, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 6: feedback from instructor and committee on written report,</td>
<td>Week 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stage 7: oral qualifying examination</td>
<td>March 8, 2021</td>
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<td>Week 10</td>
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<td>March 15, 2021</td>
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<td>Weeks 15 - 16</td>
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<td>April 30, 2021</td>
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**Grading**

The written report and oral exam presentation will be evaluated based on the following three major criteria:

- Completeness
- Accuracy
- Quality of presentation and acknowledgement of sources.

The UNT scale for grading is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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An **Incomplete Grade** ("I") is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of a term/semester and only if a student (1) is passing the course and (2) has a justifiable and documented reason, beyond the control of the student (such as serious illness or military service), for not completing the work on schedule. The student must arrange with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements. Please refer to [http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/academic-record-incomplete.html](http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/academic-record-incomplete.html) for more information.

The UNT Graduate Catalog describes and explains withdrawal policies and deadlines. The UNT Registrar’s Website [http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide](http://registrar.unt.edu/registration/spring-registration-guide) lists specific deadlines regarding withdrawal, including the deadlines to withdraw from a course with an automatic grade of \( W \), to withdraw with instructor-determined grade of \( W/WF \), and to withdraw from entire semester. Please note that a student who simply stops attending class and does not file a withdrawal form may receive a final course grade of F.

This class may only be taken twice. If the student does not pass the written or oral portion of the class, then a grade of fail or incomplete will be assigned. When an incomplete is assigned, the class must be completed the next semester. A passing grade cannot be assigned if the student has not successfully completed the written report or failed the oral exam.
**SUGGESTED READINGS**

1. **Suggested Information Science Core Readings**

**IMPORTANT:** This is only a starting place for readings in information science in general and information behavior in particular. It is not intended to be comprehensive and does not cover the core readings for specific concentration topics (e.g., consumer behavior and experience management, cybersecurity, data science, health informatics, journalism, linguistics, GIS, etc.)


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1 Fisher's earlier work is under the name K. E. Pettigrew.


2. *Suggested Research Prospective Readings*

**IMPORTANT:** This list includes general readings on research in information science. It includes readings on paradigms and assumptions underlying research in information science and related disciplines; foci of scholarly and professional literature; quantitative and qualitative research methods; development of research questions and research agendas.


3. **Suggested Concentration Core Readings**

To Be Selected by Student with Committee Chair
UNT Acceptable Student Behavior and Academic Integrity Policy (Including Plagiarism)

Students are expected to be engaged with the course throughout the semester and to demonstrate professional behavior. This means interacting in a supportive and tactful manner based on mutual respect for each other's ideas and approaches.

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. 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 https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Standards of academic integrity are maintained and enforced by UNT faculty and administrative authorities. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism and other unethical and illegal activities. The instructor of this course abides by and enforces the UNT policies on academic misconduct. The instructor assumes you have read and understood the UNT’s Student Standards of Academic Integrity Policy (http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf).

The term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:
- the use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests or examinations;
- dependence upon the aid of sources specifically prohibited by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments;
- dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s);
- the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university.

The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to:
- the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement;
- the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

Penalties range from reducing the grade for a test or assignment to revoking an academic degree already granted. Specific policies, penalties, and the appeals process are explained in UNT's Code of Student Conduct and Discipline, Graduate Catalog, and the Policy Manual, all of which are available online.

In this course, written report will be submitted via the TurnItIn Dropbox to ensure academic integrity.

UNT Policy on Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.
UNT’s Dean of Students’ website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources_0. Renee LeClaire McNamara is UNT’s Student Advocate and she can be reached through e-mail at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students’ office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

**UNT Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance Statement**

The University of North Texas 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 student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You 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 Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://disability.unt.edu/. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.