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Evaluation of Information Services

The course applies the principles of *evaluation research* to contemporary information management problems in the information professions. It covers the fundamentals of identifying and investigating *problems* relevant to continuous quality improvement and communicating the results to decision makers

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Demonstrate the ability to apply standards relevant to specific information service activities
- Analyze, synthesize, and communicate information and knowledge in a variety of formats
- Recognize existing and potential problems in a workplace and devise strategies to resolve them
- Apply relevant research studies to tasks requiring problem solving and critical thinking
- Respond to diversity among individuals and communities through policies, collections, and services (see http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/about/mission.shtml#outcomes)

Late Policy

All assignments are to be turned in on time. Late submissions are strongly discouraged. If late submission is unavoidable, arrangements should be made with me **in advance**. Without prior arrangement, late assignments will lose one point per day.

Honor Code and Academic Support

Simmons GSLIS expects each of its students to uphold the Honor System (http://my.simmons.edu/gslis/resources/student-info/honor-code.shtml) and does not tolerate academic or scholastic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, cheating, or academic fraud. Penalties range from failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or dismissal from the program.

Definition of plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information from print sources or websites; buying completed papers from others to use as one's own work.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning, and psychiatric disabilities. If you have a disability and anticipate that you will need a reasonable accommodation in this class, it is important that you contact the Disability Services Office located in the Main College Building Room E108, or via phone at (617)521-2474, early in the semester. See also the web page at http://my.simmons.edu/academics/caa/ for a list of contacts. Students with disabilities are also encouraged to contact their instructors.

TOPICAL OUTLINE AND READINGS
Note: This syllabus is not a contract. The instructor reserves the right to adjust the schedule as needed throughout the semester, including adding readings. Every effort will be made to keep assignment due dates the same.

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1/15	Topic: Introduction Purpose of Evaluation		
1/22	Topics: Planning for Evaluation Problem Statements Reading/Evaluating Research	Chapters 1 & 2 Hernon, P., Hopper, R., Leach, M., Saunders, L. L., & Zhang, J. (2007). E-book use by students: Undergraduates in economics, literature and nursing. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 33*(1), p. 3-13. Barone, C. S. (2010). Budget-friendly ideas for teen read week programming. *Young Adult Library Services*, 8(4), p. 16-18. Retrieved from EBSCO.	
1/29	Topics: Problem Statements Revisited Literature Review Ethics	Chapter 3: pages 33-37 Lesson, J. & Lacey, F. (2006). How to do (or not do) a critical literature review. *Pharmacy Education*, 6(2), 139-48. The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1998-2007). Literature reviews. The Writing Center Resources. Retrieved from: http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/literature_review.html	Post a draft problem statement to your working group. Offer feedback to at least two of your group members.
2/5	Language & Concepts Operationalization Theoretical Frameworks Logical Structure	Chapters 3 & 4 Read the definition of operationalization: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operationalization	Problem Statement Due
2/12	Methods Overview Qualitative Methods	Chapter 8 McKechnie, Lynne. (2006). Observations of babies and toddlers in library settings. *Library Trends* 55 (1), 190-201.	Revised Problem Statement (if necessary)

		Watch the video "Studying Students" on YouTube http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bUbBTni1i9E Given, L. M. & Leckie, G. J. (2003). Sweeping the library: Mapping the social activity space of the public library. Library and Information Science Research 25 (4).	
2/19	Quantitative Methods	Chapter 7 Moss, E. (2008). An Inductive Evaluation of Public Library GLBT Collection. *Collection Building 27*(4), 149-156.	Literature Review
2/26	Populations & Sampling Reliability & Validity	Chapter 5 Read entire section on sampling at: http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/sampling.php	
3/5	Applying the Tools: Surveys	Charbonneau, D. H. (2007). Demystifying survey research: Practical suggestions for effective question design. *Evidence-Based Library and Information Science Practice* 2(4).	Methods Outline Group presentation
Spring Break			
3/19	Applying the Tools: Rubrics Usability	Oakleaf, M. J. (2007) . Using rubrics to collect evidence for decision-making: What do librarians need to learn? *Evidence-Based Library and Information Practice* 2(3). Read the "usability" article on Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usability	Group presentation
3/26	Statistics: Descriptive and Inferential	Chapter 9 Byrne, Gillian. (2007). A Statistical Primer: Understanding Descriptive and Inferential Statistics. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice*. http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/168/239 Sin, Sei-Ching. (2008). Use and non-use of public libraries in the information age. *Library and Information Science Research* 30 (3).	Sample Survey due Group presentation
4/2	Statistics Continued		Group

	Tech Lab 7-9		presentation
4/9	Evaluating for Impact Writing for Researchers	Weiner, S. (2009). The contribution of the library to the reputation of a university. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 35(1), 3-13. Hulme, C. (2006). Using Cost Effectiveness Analysis: a Beginner's Guide. *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice.* http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/EBLIP/article/view/92/183 Holt, G.E. et. al. (1999). Placing a value on public library services. Public Libraries 38 (2), pp.98-	Group presentation
4/16	Presenting Data Visual Displays of Data Proposal Reviews	Chapter 10	Post draft proposals to online discussion groups. Review two proposals and offer feedback to the authors.
4/23	Topics: Creating a Culture of Evidence Wrap-Up	Chapter 11	Proposal Due

Please note that written presentation will have an impact of the grade for the written papers. It is imperative that all papers be well written. All citations should be in APA style. See: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

Problem Statement   5 points
Develop a problem statement on a library evaluation topic of your choosing. Make sure you address all four aspects of a problem statement (topic, direction, originality, and justification) in a clear and concise manner. This problem statement will form the basis of your research proposal (see below) so be sure that you have a well-thought-out, sustainable topic.

Literature Review   10 points
Building on your problem statement, compose a literature review on your topic, and identify your theoretical framework. Be sure to research the topic in depth and breadth, and include key works/ authors. Remember that literature can be from both inside and outside the library field, depending on your topic.

Methods Outline   10 points
Describe the population for your intended research, and then indicate how you will sample from this population, and why you chose that particular sampling method.
Identify and describe two methods you would use to study your research topic. Briefly explain **how** you would implement those methods, and **why** they are good choices for your particular topic.
This is a brief assignment- papers should be no more than 3 pages double-spaced.

Sample Survey   20 points
Develop a research survey designed to address an aspect of your research proposal, or another topic of your choosing. Surveys should consist of:
- Short introduction to survey topic
- Overview of intended audience and brief indication of sampling method
- 15-20 carefully written survey questions
- Brief conclusion how data would be analyzed (hypotheses to be tested, etc) and how results could be used.

Group Presentation   15 points
Each group will select a research article on a topic of their choosing. At least one week before the scheduled presentation, the group should post a citation for the article to the course page. Include information on how to retrieve the article online, or provide a .pdf of the article.

At the beginning of the scheduled class session, the group will have 15 minutes to offer a brief overview and detailed critique of the article, and then lead a class discussion. Ideally, the group should spend about 10 minutes critiquing the article, and 5 minutes on class discussion Areas of discussion/critique should include:

- Problem statement (Are all four elements present? If not, how could you revise it to address all four?)
- Literature review
    - Any key works omitted?
    - is the scope and depth acceptable?
    - Are cited works relevant and timely?

- Are all important concepts/terms identified and operationalized?
- Methodology (Is it appropriate for the problem statement and research questions? Is it clearly outlined so that it can be understood/replicated? Is it well implemented?)
- Does this research pass the "so what?" test? How might the organization have used the findings?
- Is the study a good piece of evaluation research? Why or why not?
- How could the research be improved?
- How could the findings/results be applied?

Leading a class discussion can be challenging! It is a good idea to come with a few questions to spur the conversation.

Research Proposal   <u>**30 points**</u>

Building on your problem statement and literature review, submitted previously, develop a full proposal that you would submit to the organization's senior management team. Cover the following:

- Problem statement
- Literature review/theoretical framework
- Objectives, hypotheses/research questions
- Procedures
  - o Research Design
  - o Two methodologies (together with data collection instruments)
- Reliability and validity
- What statistics are appropriate to address research questions/hypotheses
  - o Descriptive statistics
  - o Inferential statistics
- Explain how the results could be used by your management team.

Class Participation and Attendance   <u>**10 points**</u>

Class participation through regular class attendance and regular, thoughtful contributions to online and class discussions is an important part of the learning process and of your total grade. Prepare for class discussions by careful attention to readings and come to class prepared to participate in discussions. If you need to miss a class, please notify me ahead of time. You are responsible for obtaining any materials relevant to the missed class. Missing more than two classes will adversely affect your grade.