ENSC 595-005 Research Design
T/Th 6-10:15

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Office Hours (OH): T/Th 4-5            M/W 4-5

Course Description:
This course is designed to give graduate students experience in scientific writing and research skills so they may begin to launch their Master’s thesis research. The goals of this course are for you to master the skills needed to (1) identify a thesis topic and potential advisor, (2) conceptualize and plan a research project, (3) research and write a literature review, (3) learn the basics behind environmental research methods, (4) conduct research in a professional and ethical manner. If you choose to pursue the research project or are a PSM student, these skills are still relevant for preparing a research project and for writing grant proposals in professional settings.

Textbook Required:

Assessment
Participation (20%)
Students are expected to actively participate and attend class throughout the semester. Since the class meets only twice per week, it is extremely important to attend all classes. Speak to me about excused absences prior to their occurrence.

Assignments (30%)
Throughout the semester you will be asked to provide short written assignments. These assignments include a topic writeup, Curriculum Vitae, RefWorks, research questions, and literature review outline. Instructions for each assignment will be discussed in class and/or posted via Blackboard.

Draft Literature Review (10%) and Literature Review (30%)
Students are expected to produce a literature review as the culminating project for the course. A literature review examines all pertinent research regarding the individual’s research topic and identifies how your research fits into the greater scheme of scientific research. You are required to have a minimum of 15 scholarly sources and it is recommended that the literature review be at least 10 double spaced pages excluding the bibliography and any figures.

Presentation (10%)
Students will present their research questions and findings of their literature review to the class and receive feedback on their topic and research. Presentations must demonstrate how your work will fit into the broader topic of environmental science and its importance.

It is expected that students will keep open communication with the instructors AND their thesis adviser so you can make adequate progress on your research questions, topic, and literature review. Doing so will allow this class to help advance your progress in our graduate program.

Grades will be posted on blackboard along with any announcements and partial lecture notes. We reserve the right to offer extra credit, but you should not expect it or ask for it. Due to privacy laws, we do not discuss grades via email. If you have questions about your grade(s), please make an appointment with me to discuss your concerns.

Attending Lecture and Completing the Readings
To do well in this course, you will need to come to lecture and keep up with the readings. The information being taught is cumulative: you will not understand material if you skip sections. There will be examples provided during lecture that are not in the text but will nevertheless be important.

In the event that class must be cancelled due to inclement weather, conference attendance, etc., we will assign additional work or assignments. These may consist of, but are not limited to: participation in blackboard forums, additional readings, etc.
During lecture please be respectful of everyone’s learning experience. This includes:

- No talking amongst each other. Please leave your social conversations for outside the classroom. However, questions during lectures are encouraged. If you have a question, raise your hand or catch me after class.
- Please don’t leave in the middle of lecture. It is distracting for many people, including me. If you need to leave, sit near an exit.

Contacting Us
We will not respond to queries to which answers are explicitly stated in the syllabus. The reading assignments, assignment dates, as well as policies on late/make-up work are clearly stated herein; thus we will not reply to messages asking about these topics. The fastest way to contact me is via email.

Academic Dishonesty
We will not tolerate cheating or academic misconduct/dishonesty in my courses; examples of these behaviors include (but are not limited to):

- Plagiarism (passing off the work of another as that of your own)
- Copying answers from your neighbors during exams/activities
- Dishonesty concerning reasons for absence from class
- Any other actions that might give you an unfair advantage over your classmates.

All cases of academic dishonesty/misconduct will be referred immediately to the appropriate authorities. The penalties for engaging in academic dishonesty and/or misconduct can range from a grade of “F” for an assignment to an automatic failure of the course. Please consult the university policy at http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c1.shtml.

Late/Make-Up Work
Make-up work will not be assigned, except in extreme circumstances and where you have documentation (i.e. doctor’s note). If you must miss a class due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances, you MUST notify the instructor prior to missing if possible.

Disability Services Notice
We work hard to ensure a quality learning experience for all students. If you need specific accommodations to get the most out of this class, please let me know by (1) informing me of your particular needs, and (2) providing the appropriate documentation from the campus learning services office. We will make every effort to accommodate your needs, but you must notify me by the first week of class if you need special arrangements.

Course Schedule:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sources, Peer Review, &amp; Scientific Research (Y)</td>
<td>2, 3, 14, A&amp;L Ch 1</td>
<td>CV/resume (Due June 11th) RefWorks (Due June 11th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Problem Statements &amp; Literature Reviews, (M)</td>
<td>“Review of the Literature”</td>
<td>Lit Rev Outline/map (Due June 16th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Res Qs, &amp; Hypotheses (Y)</td>
<td>“Research Qs &amp; Hypotheses”</td>
<td>Res Qs (Due June 23rd)</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Proposals: Methods, Budgets &amp; Timelines (Y)</td>
<td>“Function of a Proposal”, 8</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>Methods: Validity &amp; Reliability (M)</td>
<td>Ch 12</td>
<td>Lit Review work</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Methods: Sampling, Quant&amp;Qual, Statistics (Y)</td>
<td>9, 10</td>
<td>Lit Rev Draft (Due June 25th)</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>Methods: Surveys, Field, &amp; Mapping (M)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Figures, Conferences (M)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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<td>July 2</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<td>Lit Rev due</td>
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Note: We consider this syllabus a contract between us and the students in this course. In writing this syllabus, we have obligated ourselves to follow the policies and procedures contained herein. You are responsible for understanding and following these policies as well. We reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus. You will receive verbal and written notification of major changes to course policies, procedures and content.