COURSE NAME, NUMBER AND PREREQUISITES:

School of Information Resources and Library Science
University of Arizona
506, Research Methods: Seavey
The Syllabus and Some Background on 506

Well I'll Be!

This is a classic example of "what goes around, comes around." 506 is the first pure online course I taught at Arizona many, many, years ago. It convinced me that we can, in fact, teach online although it is not for everybody. Anyway, onward.

But first, a little techno test: Video. About which- this is just a test I am using. I've gotten a lot better at making these things, so wait a bit and better production values will appear. Maybe.

A word of advice here. Read the whole syllabus now. If there is critical information in here somewhere, and you miss it because you did not read this thing, guess whose fault it is?

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

506, as taught by the Professor is a mixture of more or less mainstream social science research methodology and some exposure to research/evaluation in our field. The idea is not to make researchers out of you, but to make you better consumers of research, in both a theoretical and practical sense. Libraries and information agencies are frequent targets of research, as well as depositories of research. Some of that research is quite well done. Some, not so very good. We will spend some time with systems used to evaluate libraries, as they are frequently the basis for research articles. Many users are both producers and consumers of research, so it is best that the librarian involved have at least some idea of what the process is all about.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Successful completion of this course will help students achieve the A2, and A3 competencies outlined at http://sirls.arizona.edu/about/studentCompetencies. Personally I think we could add C8 to that list, but not everybody might agree with me. More specifically, by the end of the semester, students will be able to: better evaluate published research in the field, both from a theoretical and practical viewpoint.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:

The text will be The Craft of Research, Third Edition, by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. It is not fabulous but as the price on Amazon as of 4/15/10 is $11.56 new, with used copies starting at $8 I think we will use it. For reasons I will not put into print I will not order the thing through the UA bookstore. Use Amazon or ABE or your book finding web page of choice.

Other readings will all be online, either in a database available through the UofA library at http://www.library.arizona.edu
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course will consist of lectures and discussion of common readings. Heavy emphasis will be placed on the student's ability to analyze and critique published research in the field. Participation in class discussion sessions is essential. See the schedule below for due dates. Everything but the final will be due while class is in session.

Statistics exercises: Students will solve a set of statistical problems, outside of class. Some of the questions will be done using a calculator, the others using a spreadsheet program. In general I can read almost any version of Excel or QuattroPro, Windows or Mac.

There will be two exams during the semester, at roughly the one-third, and two-thirds points. They will be a mix of objective questions, and one or two essays. I am looking for evidence that your little gray cells are working and you get, conceptually, what the class is covering.

A Final Exam Along with the last class I will post a final exam. The final will involve evaluating some published research, as well as a short essay or two. The final will be due during finals week.

COURSE, SCHOOL, AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Academic Code of Integrity

Students are expected to abide by The University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity. 'The guiding principle of academic integrity is that a student's submitted work must be the student's own.' If you have any questions regarding what is acceptable practice under this Code, please ask an Instructor.

Accommodating Disabilities

The University has a Disability Resource Center. If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Disability Resource Center and request that the DRC send me, the Instructor, official notification of your accommodation needs as soon as possible. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate.

Assignment Policies

How to submit your assignments: How do you want students to submit assignments? Do you want them to include any particular identifying information on their assignments? Will assignments be returned to them, or will they just see a posted grade? Anything else that they'd need to know?

Assignment due dates: Since the Course Schedule section (above) will spell out specific due dates, this section is used to describe any late penalties and any particulars about exactly when items are due (e.g. "Surface-mailed assignments must be postmarked no later than the stated due date.").

Writing style: Are students supposed to use any particular writing style, such as APA or Chicago Manual? Are there any on-line writing resources that might be helpful to your students as they prepare their assignments? What if English is not their native tongue...is help available to them?

Late Policy

Incompletes

The current Catalog reads
The grade of I may be awarded only at the end of a term, when all but a minor portion of the course work has been satisfactorily completed. The grade of I is not to be awarded in place of a failing grade or when the student is expected to repeat the course; in such a case, a grade other than I must be assigned. Students should make arrangements with the instructor to receive an incomplete grade before the end of the term ...

If the incomplete is not removed by the instructor within one year the I grade will revert to a failing grade.

GRADING:

Grading Students will be evaluated on the following:
Statistics Assignment: 30%
The two "thirds" exams: 40% taken together.
Final Exam: 20%
Class Participation: 10%

All material will be graded on a numerical basis. The following standards apply in assigning final grades:

A= 90 or above
B= 80-89
C= 70-79
I'm not particularly happy with that scale, but it is what the university dictates.

Numerical scores are not rounded up when computing grades.

A word on grading.
This is graduate school. Simply doing the work on time in a reasonable fashion earns a grade of "B." The grade of "A" is reserved for work that shows evidence of going beyond the mere requirements of completing the assignment. Heavy emphasis will be placed on the student's ability to analyze and critique the subject at hand- in other words, critical thinking is a must. Participation in class discussion sessions is essential.

INSTRUCTOR NAME AND CONTACT ADDRESSES:

COMMUNICATIONS In general I prefer that for class matters you use the D2L email system. If D2L is down, or I do not seem to be looking at it, use seavey@email.arizona.edu.

Office Hours: I will do office hours on Skype- free internet phone service, complete with video. On Skype I am Desert11Sailor (all one word.) I will have Skype up and running on Monday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Or email me and make an appointment. I am usually available unless there are dog walkies in progress.

In general I expect that you will check in on the class website at least every other day to see if you have email. D2L email will be the primary email system here, so you do have to check in frequently. You have to check the News section of D2L because that is where I post things for the entire class to read. And check the various discussion boards in case there are interesting things going on there. If something is there, and you miss it because you were not checking in, guess whose fault it is?
Courses

- Syllabi
  - Fall 11
  - Summer 2011
  - Spring 11
  - Fall 10
    - IRLS418/518 Information Quality
    - IRLS432/532 Online Searching Fall 2010
    - IRLS506-001 Research Methods
    - IRLS506-010 Research Methods for Fall 2010
    - IRLS506-011 Research Methods
    - IRLS515-010/011 Organization of Information (Fall 2010 Virtual, Cui)
    - IRLS520-010 Ethics for Library and Information Professionals (Virtual Fallis)
    - IRLS520-011 Ethics for Library and Information Professionals (Virtual Mathiesen)
    - IRLS521 Fall 2010
    - IRLS524 Information Resources and Services Fall 2010
    - IRLS550 Information Environments from Hispanic and Native American Perspectives
    - IRLS553 Issues in Culture & Information Technology (Draft)
    - IRLS561 Academic Libraries Practice and Administration
    - IRLS563 Readers' Advisory Services in Public Libraries
    - IRLS566 Small and Rural Libraries Administration and Practice
    - IRLS571 Introduction to Information Technology Atkinson
    - IRLS571-010 Introduction to Information Technology for Fall 2010
    - IRLS574 Digital Libraries
    - IRLS588-011 ISSUES IN INFORMATION RESOURCES: Intellectual Freedom
    - IRLS608 Fall 2010
    - IRLS671 Introduction to Digital Collections
    - IRLS675 Advanced Digital Collections (Fall 2010)
  - Summer 10
  - Winter 10-11
  - Spring 10
  - Winter 09 10
  - Fall 09
  - Summer 09
  - Spring 09
  - Winter 08 09
  - Fall 08
  - Archive of Old Syllabi

- Schedules
- Core Courses
- Course Delivery Options
- Course Descriptions
- Distributed Electives
- Individual Studies: Internships, Independent Studies & Practica
Guided exploration

Click a term to initiate a search.

Audience  
for Students (92)  
for Faculty (28)  
for Alums (24)  
for Staff (17)  
for Prospective Students (7)  
more...

Course  
IRLS417 (2)  
IRLS418 (1)  
IRLS432 (1)  
IRLS470 (2)  
IRLS488 (6)  
more...

People  
Adjunct Faculty (152)  
Faculty (150)  
Staff (17)  
Friends (6)  

Semester  
Fall 11 (29)  
Summer 11 (27)  
Spring 11 (30)  
Winter 10 11 (1)  
Fall 10 (20)  
more...

Task  
Choosing Courses (27)  
Advising (5)  
Applying (5)  
Registering (2)  
Submitting Final Paperwork (2)  
more...

Topic  
Index (33)  
Masters (33)  
Research (20)  
Knowledge River (16)  
News (14)  
more...