ITLS 6910/7910 – Independent Research
Fall 2020
Course Syllabus

Instructors: Hillary Swanson and Mimi Recker (Links to an external site.)
Location: EDUC 270 and online
Time: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:30pm
Canvas: See canvas for course resources
Credits: 0-3
Office: EDUC 216, EDUC 229
Office Hours: By appointment via video, phone, or in person
Phone: (435) 797-0782, (435) 797-2692

This course is open to and recommended for *all* ITLS students interested in research. Participation is welcomed from non-Logan based students, as well as Logan-based students from other departments with an interest in research on learning or the design of instructional technology.

Course Overview
This course brings students and faculty together to focus on best practices in research. These include identifying fruitful research questions, choosing appropriate research methodologies, conducting literature reviews, designing studies, analyzing data, building theory, writing research papers, and presenting work to the professional community. The course will be co-taught each semester by two ITLS faculty, with one faculty member taking the lead each semester. The course will meet once a week for a duration of two hours. The details of its structure will be determined by the lead faculty. In general, members will take turns bringing their research-in-progress to the group and facilitating a workshop-style discussion. Through this process, they will gain feedback on their work and experience with being thinking-partners and active members of a scientific research community. The course can be taken for credit, ranging from 0-3 credits, depending on the nature of the students' participation and the independent research they are pursuing during the semester under the mentorship of the faculty of record. The course will be offered in both face-to-face and distance formats, to support the involvement of students who are both on- and off-campus.

This class is not lecture-based but rather is driven by student interests. Class sessions will consist of activities such as student presentations, discussions on research topics, or guided reading discussions on topics in research. The group will meet at the start of the semester to determine the topics, timeline, and format (presentation, discussion, workshop, etc.).

Example topics include:
- Crafting research questions
- Drafting a research proposal
- Designing a pilot study
- Conducting data analysis
- Preparing for comprehensive exams
- Writing a research paper
- Presenting at conferences
- Preparing a job talk
- Conducting literature reviews
- Making sense of existing theoretical or empirical work

Textbook
There are no required textbooks for this class.
Links to suggested readings are provided.

Assignments
This course is graded on a pass/fail basis and is based on student participation in class activities.

Course Resources and Readings

Duran, R. P., Eisenhart, M. A., Erickson, F. D., Grant, C. A., Green, J. L., Hedges, L. V., & Schneider, B. L. (2006). Standards for reporting on empirical social science research in AERA publications: American Educational Research Association. *Educational Researcher*, *35*(6), 33-40.

Boote, D.N. & Beile, P. (2005). Scholars before researchers: On the centrality of the dissertation literature review in research preparation. *Educational Researcher. 34(*6), 3-15.

Birkenstein, C., & Graff, G. (2018). *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing*. WW Norton & Company.

Berliner, David C. "Comment: Educational research: The hardest science of all." *Educational researcher* 31, no. 8 (2002): 18-20.

Alexander, P. A. (2020). Methodological Guidance Paper: The Art and Science of Quality Systematic Reviews. *Review of Educational Research*, *90*(1), 6-23.

Roschelle, J. (2016) U is a beautiful shape for your journal article.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/291696674_U_is_a_beautiful_shape_for_your_journal_article

Course Objectives (Aligned with the IDEA Course Evaluation System)
- **(III) Application of Learning, Professional skills** - Borrowing on material learned throughout prior coursework or experiences, articulate a well-crafted proposal, execute the promised work, and write a cogent summary highlighting key lessons learned.

- **(IV) Developing specific skills and competencies needed by professionals in the field** - Planning, proposing, and implementing a project plan; reflecting at the completion about lessons learned and guidelines for others
- **(IX) Learning how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems**– Searching for appropriate (relevant, trustworthy) literature (broadly defined) related to project efforts.

USU & Course Policies
- USU course policies: http://www.usu.edu/provost/faculty-life/syllabus.cfm (Links to an external site.)
- Student Services: http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/ (Links to an external site.)
- Provost's Office Diversity Resources: http://www.usu.edu/provost/diversity/ (Links to an external site.)