IDS 1054- Introduction to Research in the Liberal Arts and Sciences

COURSE OVERVIEW

Instructor

Charlie Fanning, Ph.D.

cfanning@ufl.edu; Turlington 1120H

Office hours: 1:00-2:30 PM on Thursdays or by appointment (use my Booking page).

Class meetings

11:45 AM-12:35 PM, Thursdays, Matherly Hall 0112

The goals for students in this course are to:

(1) navigate relevant undergraduate research activities and opportunities available to UF students, including local, national, and international experiences;

(2) develop transferrable competences, tools, and resources that can be applied in a broad range of research opportunities;

(3) gain research-specific communication skills and research-oriented professionalization strategies; and

(4) understand how to apply for, secure, and succeed in funded research opportunities.

Specific student learning objectives include:

- identifying a range of research opportunities and resources available to UF students
- understanding basic perspectives on research and research practices across disciplines
- communicating effectively with faculty mentors

- communicating research interests to peers in an accessible manner
- compiling a topical annotated bibliography
- formulating an effective research question
- conducting a peer review process
- conceptualizing, refining, and producing an original undergraduate research project proposal

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation

Throughout the course, student participation will be observed and qualitatively assessed. Quality of participation includes factors like frequency and value of contributions to class discussions, replying to classmates in forum discussions, engagement in group and collaborative work, respectful attention shown during lectures and presentations, and general attitude. To do well in participation, students should try to speak at least once per class, always engage to the best of their ability in class activities, avoid speaking or being off task whenever someone else is addressing the class, and avoid doing or saying anything hostile or disrespectful toward any person in the class. Overall quality of day-to-day participation will be evaluated twice: once at midsemester and once at end of semester.

Forum contributions

Periodically during the semester, students will be asked to post to the class forum. Forum posts will typically be assigned to supplement or reinforce classroom activities or readings. As a general rule, posts contributed to the forum will be evaluated for thoughtful completion. To do well in this category, students should post whenever asked to do so and do their best on each forum assignment. Regularly replying to your classmates' reflections in class forums is encouraged and will contribute to positive outcomes in both forum and participation grade categories.

Annotated bibliography

To build a foundation for writing research proposals, students will develop an annotated bibliography. For this assignment, students must include at least 6, scholarly, peer-reviewed articles or books in their bibliography. For each source, a full Chicago, CSE, MLA, or APA-style citation should be included followed by a 5 to 6 sentence summary. When researching, be sure to take full advantage of the resources available through the UF libraries website and on the course Canvas page. This assignment will be graded in accordance with a rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Draft research question

Building on initial desk research, students will submit a draft research question—consisting of one precise and well-formulated sentence—that seeks to address an underexamined problem in the scholarly literature. While these draft questions are likely to change and evolve over time, at this stage in the course, they will serve to organize and inspire further investigation. An effective research question will be specific, meaningful, achievable, reasoned, and testable. This assignment will be graded in accordance with a rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Report on research resources

In order to gain a greater understanding of undergraduate research opportunities, students will turn in a short report (200-300 words) on a research resource in their field—such as a journal, conference, research group or lab, digital or physical tool, archive, or special collection. The report will be the result of students' investigation into an event, publication, space, or resource of interest. The goal of this assignment is twofold. Firstly, students will learn something about the research process, history, culture, or infrastructure associated with the selected resource. And secondly, students will articulate how they might use their selected resource in a way that could be useful for the student's own research career in the immediate future. This assignment will be graded in accordance with a rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Peer review exercise

To further refine research proposals, students will participate in a peer review exercise with one of their classmates. For the first part of the assignment, students will submit a one paragraph introduction to their research proposal the Monday before class (Nov 4) on week 12 of this course. The introduction should provide an accessible overview of the student's research question, contribution to the literature, and initial thesis statement/ hypothesis. For the second part of this assignment, students will take part in an in-class peer review exercise with a classmate and provide verbal and written feedback on that classmate's work. Further details on the peer review exercise will be provided. This assignment will be graded in accordance with a rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Mock application

As the cap-stone assignment for this course, students will submit a mock-application to a hypothetical funded research opportunity, modeled after the application for the CLAS Scholars Program. The application need to be at least 500 words in length (citations and figures excluded).

If this assignment happens to overlap with a funding opportunity of interest, students are encouraged to apply; otherwise, the application can be thought of as a "practice" document for possible future use. This assignment will be graded in accordance with a rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Grading percentages are as follows:

- Participation: 20% (10% Midterm; 10% End of term)
- Forums: 20%
- Annotated bibliography: 10%
- Working research question: 5%
- Report on research resources: 10%
- Peer review exercise: 15%
- Mock proposal: 20%

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the university community. Students should make sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code (https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/). On all work submitted for credit by students at the university, the following

pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."

On the use of generative AI tools (ChatGPT, etc.) in this course:

The use of such tools is permitted and may be valuable for activities such as brainstorming and refining ideas, finding information on selected topic, drafting an outline to organize thoughts, and checking grammar and style. Students may not submit any work generated by an AI program as their own, however. For example, students must not use generative AI tools to compose responses on class forums, write a draft of an assignment, write full sentences or paragraphs of assignments, or to complete class assignments.

Grading scale

A 100-93.5%; A- 93.4-89.5%; B+ 89.4-86.5%; B 86.4-83.5%; B- 83.4-79.5%; C+ 79.4-76.5%; C 76.4-73.5%; C- 73.4-69.5%; D+ 69.4-66.5%; D 66.4-63.5%; D- 63.4-59.5%; E 59.4—0%

Please refer to the UF Catalog for information on grading and GPA (https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/).

Attendance

Because 1-hour courses meet less often than 3-hour courses, regular attendance is essential to succeed in this class. Unexcused absences after the first one will result in a 3-point deduction from the final course grade (100-point scale). Students wishing to get an absence excused should notify the instructor before the absence if possible or immediately after. They will also need to provide documentation (if applicable) and will be solely responsible for making up any missed work. Three instances of lateness will be considered equivalent to an absence and will impact your final grade accordingly. It is important to note that participation is a separate, holistic score and does not directly correlate with number of absences. Students in need of additional services and support are encouraged to consult the Dean of Students Office (https://dso.ufl.edu/).

Late work

Timely submission of assignments is critical to your success in this course. Unexcused late work will be accepted up to five days after the deadline, but will be assessed a ten-point deduction per day late. It is your responsibility to ensure that assignments are submitted on time and correctly in Canvas (please double check your uploads for content and technical errors before the deadline). Assignments sent to the instructor outside of Canvas will not be accepted. Students in need of an extension for medical or other reasons should meet with the instructor prior to the assignment deadline if possible. If you miss a deadline due to extraordinary circumstances beyond your control, you are responsible for informing the instructor as soon as possible and making arrangements to complete the missing assignment.

Accessibility and accommodations

This course intends to make learning accessible to all. The University of Florida Disability Resource Center further aims to provide a universally accessible community that supports the holistic advancement of students with disabilities. If you have a documented medical, physical, psychological, and learning disability or other difference that might require accommodations or modification of the

course procedures, please contact the Disability Resource Center (https://disability.ufl.edu/contact-us/) to register. Students who receive an accommodation letter must present it to the instructors when discussing accommodations. Please follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course materials

Course materials will be provided through Canvas by the instructor.

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under 2 GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Aug 22: Course overview and introductions

Introductions; course goals; syllabus overview

Due: Forum post #1

Week 2, Aug 29: Welcome to research

Research fundamentals; ethics and academic integrity.

Reading: Zina O'Leary, *The Essential Guide to Doing Your Research Project* (2013), Chapter 1: "Taking the Leap into the Research World."

Due: Forum post #2

Week 3, Sept 5: Identifying opportunities

Finding research and mentorship opportunities at UF

Exercise: Attending an academic conference training module

Due: Forum post #3

Week 4 Sept 12: Preliminary research and reading

How to read an article; library resources overview

Readings: W. Caleb McDaniel, "How to Read for History," Rice University (2008);

Elisabeth Pain, "How to (Seriously) Read a Scientific Paper," *Science*, March 21, 2016.

Evaluating Sources: The CRAAP Test

Due: Forum post #4

Week 5, Sept 19: Formulating your research question and bibliography

Organizing your sources; SMART research questions

Reading: O'Leary, *The Essential Guide*, Chapter 4, "Developing Your Research Question."

Due: Forum post #5

Week 6, Sept 26: Using digital resources

Conducting online research; digital resources on campus

Readings: Chris Stokel-Walker and Richard Van Noorden, "The Promise and Peril of Generative AI," *Nature*, February 6, 2023.

Emma Dahlin, "Mind the gap! On the Future of AI Research," *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* 8 (2021).

Exercise: Digital research training module

Due: Annotated bibliography

Week 7, Oct 3: Developing your proposal

Components of an effective proposal

Reading: O'Leary, *The Essential Guide*, Chapter 5, "Crafting a Research Proposal."

Due: Working research question

Week 8, Oct 10: Practicing knowledge creation

Visit to special collections, Room 100, George Smathers Library

Readings: Michael Roche, "Historical Research and Archival Sources" in Hay and Cope, Qualitative Research Methods in Human Geography (2021).

"Explore our Collections" and related pages, UF Special and Area Studies Collections, George A. Smathers Library

Due: Forum post #6

Week 9, Oct 17: Reaching out and refining your pitch

Faculty outreach; professional conduct and communication

Reading: David G. Oppenheimer, *Getting In: The Insider's Guide to Finding the Perfect Undergraduate Research Experience* (2015), Chapter 6, "Your Application Strategy."

Due: Forum post #7

Week 10, Oct 24: Writing up your research

Effective writing strategies; communicating your research

Reading: David Lindsay, Scientific Writing=Thinking in Words (2011), Chapter 1: "Thinking about Your Writing."

Exercise: Research writing training module

Due: Report on research opportunity

Week 11, Oct 31: Applying for research funding

Engaging with evaluators; exploring funding opportunities, continued

Exercise: Proposals 101 training module

Due: Forum post #8

Week 12, Nov 7: Peer review

In-class peer review

Due: Peer review exercise (complete part one by Nov 5; part two will take place in class)

Week 13, Nov 14: Student success strategies in research

Engaging with undergraduate scholars

Due: Forum post #9

Week 14, Nov 21: Wrap-up

Proposal troubleshooting; lessons learned and next steps

Due: Forum post #10

Mock proposal due December 08.