RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

AMERICAN INDIAN STUDIES 548 – SPRING 2010
COMMUNICATIONS 214
WEDNESDAY 3:00 – 5:30

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hours · mondays and wednesdays 1:30 – 2:30 pm and by appointment

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class web site · http://d2l.arizona.edu/

required texts


statement
This course is about research design and methodology in American Indian Studies and related cognate fields. No one person is an expert in all methods of research, but by the end of this course you will know about a range of methods used in American Indian Studies, and you will know which kinds of research problems are best addressed by which methods.

course goals
This course is designed to help you become a professional and ethical researcher who produces the highest quality scholarship, and will provide you with information about and experience in:

1. identifying issues of importance in American Indian Studies and related fields of inquiry.

2. establishing appropriate ways of knowing, and recognizing assumptions and biases in research and how to control for them.

3. understanding the difference between qualitative and quantitative research, and learning to recognize the values of both interpretative and empirical frameworks.
4. developing appropriate research methods and techniques and formulating them into a research design that can be used for a thesis or dissertation prospectus.

5. developing a research design for a Master’s thesis or a Ph.D. dissertation.

6. formulating and designing a research question that is of value to American Indian communities and Indigenous peoples.

course outline

This course will be held in combined lecture, seminar and interactive workshop formats as well as individual tutorials. It will meet once a week and requires extensive student participation. The following topics will be covered:

1. **Brief Review of Research and Theoretical Goals of American Indian Studies.** A review of particular research needs of American Indian communities and the research and theoretical goals of American Indian Studies. The goal will be to obtain an understanding of how American Indian Studies is a distinctive discipline that uses theories and methodologies of other social science and humanities disciplines yet, has its own unique goals and agendas designed to address the needs of American Indian communities and increase understanding about Indigenous peoples and their lives.

2. **Recognizing Assumptions, Research Goals, and Research Questions.** We will learn to recognize how clearly and poorly scholar’s write or talk about their research and the information they provide to allow you to assess it. This skill will be needed for writing a literature review, and conducting related analyses. We will focus on internet and library research to help in the formation of a pertinent research question.

3. **Developing A Realistic and Relevant Research Question.**

4. **Constructing a Literature Review and Compiling a Bibliography for a Research Project.**

5. **Identifying Interdisciplinary Research Methods and Practicing Selected Methodologies through Class and Individual Exercises.** The distinctions between theory, methodology, and techniques will be discussed. Students will learn how to choose appropriate methods to answer AIS research questions, to identify and operationalize variables, to choose appropriate research techniques based on research problems. We will focus on those techniques that will be most useful for the class based on student’s identified research interests and basic methodological tools.

6. **Practical Experience in Interviewing and Documentary Research.**

   a. Focus groups and interviews
   b. Statistical analysis: census and demographic tribal community profiles
   c. Finding and reading important historical and contemporary documents

7. **Thesis/Dissertation Prospectus.** How to convince your committee that you know what you want to do. How to introduce your proposed research project to the appropriate American Indian and Indigenous community and acquire their input and approval. The course requires students to produce a quality thesis or dissertation prospectus to submit to their MA or PhD committees.

8. **Ethics, Ethical Research, Human Subjects Test and Human Subjects Forms.** We will talk extensively about ethical research in AIS, and with American Indian and Indigenous communities.
course requirements

Initial Statement of Research Problem. (not graded) one to two page, single-spaced background statement that broadly outlines your proposed research topic for your Master’s thesis or Ph.D. Dissertation. This will identify the anticipated theoretical framework and area of American Indian Studies that encompasses the proposed project (i.e., such as culture and society, law and policy, literature, and American Indian education), and a tentative research question(s) to be addressed. This should be as specific as possible. This will be reviewed by the instructor and then revised into the two page, single-spaced statement of research purpose and significance.

Curriculum Vitae. (not graded)

Theory and Method Article Summaries. (not graded)

Statement of Research Problem and Statement of Significance. (10 points each) A well-focused one page, single-spaced statement of research problem that delineates the specific topic of research including a research question(s). The statement will also include specific objectives and goals of the project, why your proposed research is significant to American Indian Studies, scholarship in general, and the people with whom you propose to work. Include the anticipated benefits to knowledge in your statement as well as any practical offshoots (such as policy implications).

Literature Review and Proposed Thesis or Dissertation Bibliography. (30 points) A 3 to 5 page (single-spaced, bibliography not included in page count) or 7 to 10 page (double-spaced, bibliography not included in page count) graded discussion of the state of current knowledge relevant to your topic and a review of at least 10 published works. This can be articles or books. The statement should demonstrate that: (a) the topic and research question are current and of interest to the scholarly community, and (b) the specific problem is not being studied by someone else in exactly the same manner as your proposed research. To accompany this review, you will construct an extended bibliography, consisting of at least two single spaced pages of published works that will be used for your project. These works can be monographs, articles, government documents, laws, and Internet sources. The bibliography should follow the format of references appropriate to publishing your thesis or dissertation.

Methodology Exercises. We will conduct several methodology exercises both in-class and outside class. These will include interviewing, census analysis, and locating and using historical and contemporary documents. (5 points each).

Statement of Research Problem and Statement of Methodology. (20 points). Each student will write a 2 to 3 page, single-space research problem and statement of methodology that contains information on the methodology chosen to find the answer to a research question. To help you with this assignment there are a number of worksheets prepared for the class. Go to files located in D2L, and then look under handouts and worksheets. Of special use are the research design worksheets that will guide you through your decision making process.

Ethics: Human Subjects Forms and Test. (10 points each) Use University of Arizona Human Subjects Review Packet (available in the AIS office, graduate school, or University’s website). Follow the directions and fill in all parts for your proposed research project. Complete the required Human Subjects test. Both the forms and the test are graded.

Thesis or Dissertation Research Prospectus. (50 points) This will be based on a research topic of your choice that you plan to undertake for your thesis or dissertation project. The proposal will be complete (except for letters of recommendation by faculty) and will contain: a cover sheet, your curriculum vitae/resume, a
justified budget, a time schedule, a completed bibliography, and your thesis prospectus (up to 10 pages, single-spaced), as well as any other forms required by the granting agency if you chose this option.

Class Presentation of Research Project. (15 points) during the final weeks of class to provide you with experience for an oral presentation.

Attendance at AIS Vine Deloria Speaker Series and IPLP Brown Bags. (10 points) Please refer to the departmental flyers and emails for topics and dates.

Participation in class activities and class discussion as well as completion of reading assignments. (20 points) If you miss more than two classes without a legitimate excuse your grade will be lowered.

** Students can submit drafts of their prospectus or methodology exercises at any time during the semester for review. Drafts will not be graded, but will be commented on. A central goal of the course is to practice new types of writing and becoming familiar with them. Remember: no thesis, research or grant proposal is ever completed in one draft. Time yourself accordingly.

** Each student MAY be given individual assignments based on their needs to help them conceptualize their projects. These should be completed in a timely manner because they will help make other assignments easier.

** Assignments build skills in this class and completion of one will help in the completion of others.

class engagement

“Engagement” is measured by regular attendance, preparation in required readings, and in-class discussion and assignments. Readings listed for each topic should be completed by the date indicated. All assignments are due the day indicated on the syllabus. It is critical that you complete all assignments on time. It is very easy to fall behind in this class. Late assignments will result in a lower grade.

The bottom line: All students are expected to attend class and actively participate.

course evaluation

Written work will be graded on the basis of scholarship, creativity, clarity of expression and style (including grammar and spelling), as well as improvement during the semester. I expect that your graded assignments will not be “works in progress,” and that your final research prospectus will be something that you would be proud to show others, including members of your M.A. or Ph.D. committee, your fellow students, and your family. All work must be properly cited.

Professionalism includes completing assignments on time. Failure to do so will result in a lower grade. Failure to turn in an assignment that is marked “not graded” will result in a failing grade. No incompletes will be given; failure to complete the course requirements will result in a grade of E, as specified in university policy. In the world of grant funding—your work is either done on time or it is not—which means you are not eligible to compete for money to fund your research.

NO GRADING WILL BY DONE BY THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

All written assignments must be typed (single or double-spaced as directed). Complaints that your computer or printer have failed does not constitute an acceptable excuse for turning in material late. If this happens there are several places on campus you can print the material, including my office. Alternatively you may
send an assignment to me via email. Also always backup your writing. Where your thesis or dissertation is concerned a slight case of paranoia is acceptable.

**required assignments**

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<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Statement of Research Problem</td>
<td>Not graded</td>
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<tr>
<td>Curriculum Vitae</td>
<td>Not graded</td>
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<td>Theory and Method Summaries of Article</td>
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<td>Ethics:</td>
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<td>Human Subjects Test</td>
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<td>Human Subjects Forms</td>
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<td>Revised Statement of Research Problem</td>
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<td>Significance Statement</td>
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<td>Literature Review and Bibliography</td>
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<td>Methodology Exercises</td>
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<td>- Interviewing exercise</td>
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<td>- Census exercise</td>
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<td>- Information gathering exercise</td>
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<td>Statement of Research Problem and Statement of Methodology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Presentation of Thesis or Dissertation Project</td>
<td>15 points</td>
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<td>Thesis and Dissertation Prospectus/Grant Proposal Package</td>
<td>50 points</td>
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<td>Participation in Class Discussions, Preparedness, and Attendance</td>
<td>20 points</td>
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<td>Attendance at Departmental Speaker Series and Brown Bags</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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<td>Total Points</td>
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**grades**

The final grade for this course will be assessed according the percentage of points earned from the total points available for the course. The following breakdown of points and grades will be used:

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<tr>
<th>Points</th>
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**academic integrity**

Pursuant to the University Code of Integrity, all submitted work, examinations, reports and other projects must be a student's own work. Papers submitted for other courses are NOT acceptable for credit. Sources shall always be properly cited in established scholarly formats. Copying or allowing others to copy answers on examinations will result in a failing grade.

**university policy on absences**

Students are expected to be regular and punctual in class attendance. Students who miss more than 30 percent of the classes are dropped from the class according to university policy.

**disability accommodations**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the instructor during the first week of class of any accommodations needed for the course. Late notification may cause the requested accommodations to be unavailable.
provisional course schedule

week 1 · jan 13

key topics · introduction to the course, discussion of goals and student wishes, discussion of required texts and their value, theses and dissertations, committees and research interests, introduction to a prospectus and a grant proposal

handouts · (1) choosing an advisor, (2) thesis and dissertation timeline, (3) thesis and dissertation checklist, (4) thesis and dissertation outline (4) how to survive an oral defense, (5) statement of research problem, (6) thesis and dissertation choice, (7) comprehensive exam worksheet (8) networking (9) surviving graduate school readings (6) sample curriculum vitae

assignments to begin · initial statement of research problem, curriculum vitae

week 2 · jan 20

key topics · AIS theory and identifying specific research problems, what is theory? and what is methodology?, standards of scholarship, learning how to read critically, reviewing books and articles and critically assessing scholarship, conceptualizing your own project

handouts · (1) theory and paradigm


assignments due · (2) theory and methodology summary of one article above, and present reading in class for discussion

week 3 · jan 27

key topics · conceptualizing and constructing your own project, formulating a relevant research question, what is research design?, parts of a research design

handouts · (1) research design, (2) significance statement

assignments due · (1) initial statement of research problem, (2) students present reading in class for discussion

week 4 · feb 03

key topics · what is the difference between qualitative and quantitative research?, basics social research, hypotheses and variables, interdisciplinary research: what does this mean?

handouts · (1) differences between qualitative and quantitative research, (2) qualitative and quantitative worksheet

required readings · (1) Bernard 2000 (Ch. 11) Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis, pp. 417-436, (2) Burnett 2009 (Ch. 9) Collecting Data: Qualitative Methods, 154-170.

assignments due · (1) curriculum vitae, (2) students present reading in class for discussion

week 5 · feb 10

key topics · finding important information, finding and reading the appropriate literature, finding and assessing facts and information about a topic, using the internet and data sources successfully, finding census information on a tribe, nation or community, advocacy and collaborative research (find examples of), major websites related to tribal interests


handouts · (1) information gathering exercise handout, (2) see the university of arizona library web link: http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/courses/ais/548/index.html, (3) literature review handout

assignments due · (1) information gathering exercise—bring your results to class and discuss your sources, (2) students present reading in class for discussion

assignments to begin · (1) draft bibliography, (2) literature review

week 6 · feb 17

key topics · the literature review


assignments due · (1) draft bibliography, (2) students present reading in class for discussion

week 7 · feb 24

key topics · ethical research, human subjects test, what are human subject concerns?, what is ethical research?

required readings · (1) Penslar 1995a Research Involving Human Subjects, (2) Penslar 1995b Science and Coercion, (3) Brugge and Missaghian 2006 Protecting the Navajo People through Tribal Regulation of Research, (4) Rubin 2005 Indian Givers: The Havasupai Trusted the White Man to Help with a Diabetes
Epidemic, Instead, ASU Tricked them into Bleeding for Academia,  

handouts · (1) cardinal rules in indian country, (2) ethics and archaeology, (3) ethical problems designing research, (4) professional ethics, (5) ethical problems after data collection, (6) ethical problems and fieldwork

assignments due · (1) bring to class a list of some of the ethical concerns in conducting research with native communities, (2) students present readings in class for discussion

week 8 · mar 03
key topics · ethical research, human subjects test, what are human subject concerns?, what is ethical research?

required readings · (5) UA Human Subjects Materials, http://www.irb.arizona.edu/,
handouts · (1) human subjects form van vlack, (2) informed consent van vlack
assignments due · (1) human subjects test and form; (2) informed consent form
assignments to begin · (1) significance statement

week 9 · mar 10
key topics · interviewing, designing questions, types of interviews: structured, semi-structured, and informal, individual interviews

handouts ·(1) interviewing exercise
assignments due · (1) revised statement of research problem, (2) significance statement

week 10 · mar 17 [no class, spring break]

week 11 · mar 24
key topics · archival and documentary research

handouts ·(1) census exercise
assignments due · (1) interviewing exercise—bring your results to class and discuss your sources
week 12 · mar 31
key topics · doing fieldwork, participant observation

required readings · (1) Bernard 2005 (Ch 13) Participant Observation, pp. 342-386, (2) Wolcott 2005 (Ch 5) Fieldwork: The Basic Arts, pp. 79-114.

assignments due · (1) students present reading in class for discussion, (2) census exercise—bring your results to class and discuss your sources

week 13 · apr 07 [no class]
assignments due · (1) literature review. This is a due date, not a target date.

week 14 · apr 14
key topics · data analysis, validity and reliability, assessing the quality of information and data: what to do when your information sources disagree


assignments due · (1) statement of research problem and statement of methodology, (2) students present reading in class for discussion,

week 15 · apr 21 [presentations]
assignments due · (1) 30 minute class presentation of your project

week 16 · may 28 [presentations]
assignments due · (1) 30 minute class presentation of your project

week 17 · may 05
key topics · summarizing the course: highlight key themes, cover any materials yet to be discussed, writing your thesis or dissertation, preserving your data

assignments due · (1) thesis or dissertation prospectus. This is a due date, not a target date.

week 18 · may 12 [finals week, no class]