

# **INTERDISCIPLINARY INQUIRY**

*Fall 2016*

**IDS 494**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is designed for students to apply interdisciplinary studies as a mode of inquiry and to conduct preliminary research for their capstone projects to be completed in IDS 495. Students will learn to broaden and deepen their understanding of a well-defined research topic by analyzing the problem and evaluating relevant disciplinary insights into it. The course is split into two parts: 1) Inquiry as Conversation and 2) Inquiry as Research. In Part I (Weeks 1-8), we will build a list of secondary source readings that address your research question. Students will read the sources critically and systematically in search of conflicting insights between their different areas of study. Upon completing their selected readings, students will write a literature review to show they can participate in academic conversations. We will also be engaging in collective discussions about your topic in order to help you frame it as a problem worth studying. In Part II (Weeks 9-15), students will conduct preliminary research to establish a foundation for their capstone projects. Together, we will develop a research proposal to guide in the collection and evaluation of sources, explore the process of doing research, and talk about how your research topic fits in with the existing body of literature you examined in the first half of the course.

## **COURSE GOALS**

The lectures, readings, and assignments are intended to cultivate the growth and development of the interdisciplinary research process. The main goal is for students to evaluate disciplinary insights, identify conflicts between disciplinary insights, and to partake in interdisciplinary investigations in order to make their work legible and understandable to a wider audience. The course pushes students to consciously reflect on what it means to actually do interdisciplinary research – and why it matters for helping to address the world’s most pressing problems.

## **COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

In line with the University’s Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs), upon successful completing of this course students will be able to:

- Contribute to critical conversations about interdisciplinary theory and practice
- Recognize the complexity of problems and identify different perspectives from which problems and questions can be viewed
- Transfer knowledge and skills gained from general and specialized studies to new settings and problems, specifically in the design of the IDS capstone project
- Identify conflicting disciplinary insights on their research topic
- Build a substantial, interdisciplinary, original argument using sound evidence
- Communicate research interests clearly in writing and orally to broader audiences outside of their respective fields

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Gerald Graff, Cathy Birkenstein, and Russell Durst, *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing with Readings* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2015)

\*Additional readings will be available on Web Campus (listed on the Course Schedule with \*)

## **RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams, *The Craft of Research*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008)

## **ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Participation/Discussion (15%)

Critical Source Reviews (20%)

Critical Literature Review/State of the Field (20%)

Revised Research Proposal (10%)

Faculty Meeting Report (10%)

Preliminary Research Paper (25%)

### ***Participation/Discussion (15%)***

Learning is a social endeavor – and attendance and participation are key components of learning. I expect each of you to be active agents in your own education. In other words, attendance is mandatory. Every absence will result in a negative effect on your grade. That being said, participation does not mean simply showing up. Active participation includes doing the reading *before* class, listening actively, taking part in class activities, and engaging fellow students while maintaining respect for one another. I will also occasionally give reading quizzes at the beginning of class. Your success on these quizzes will factor into your participation grade. These quizzes cannot be made up

### ***Critical Source Reviews (20%)***

**DUE DATES: Mondays (Weeks 3-8) in class**

From Week 3 to Week 8 students will write a total of **six** critical source reviews (one each week), which is an analysis of an academic article/book that details the author's main argument and claims, key concepts, and methods and approaches used. Learning how to read critically and analytically is important for any scholar, but particularly important for interdisciplinary studies scholars who have to draw on the knowledge and insights from various disciplines. The goal for this assignment, then, is to push you to continue being receptive to the disciplinary insights of your areas of study and disciplines. Also, this assignment serves as a "warm up" for the critical literature review essay. Each source review (approx. **250-300 words**) will require you to systematically and critically evaluate a secondary source of your choice.

### ***Critical Literature Review/State of the Field (20%)***

**DUE DATE: Monday, 10/24 in class**

For one of the major assignments in this course, you must write a 4-5 page (double-spaced) critical literature review (also referred to in this class as a "state of the field" essay) that evaluates, analyzes, and discusses the relevant, most cutting edge published research on your research topic. A critical literature review does more than simply provide a summary of relevant secondary sources. It requires you to both summarize (report the important information in the source) *and* synthesize (reorganize the information so that it sheds light on your topic). The literature review must demonstrate three skills: 1) your ability to search for relevant sources and information, 2) your ability to choose key and reliable published works, and 3) your capacity to identify and compare/contrast main arguments and research methods. You need to write a literature review to show that you know what experts in your areas of study have said about your topic, what is missing from the debate, and most importantly, how your original research project contributes to the conversation.

### ***Revised Research Proposal (10%)***

**DUE DATE: Wednesday, 11/2 in class**

Students are required to revise their research proposals from IDS 240 and clearly outline a research agenda for the successful completion of their capstone project.

### ***Faculty Meeting Report (10%)***

**DUE DATE: Monday, 11/21 in class**

This assignment requires that students have a face-to-face conversation about their research proposal with a UNLV professor from one of their areas of study. You must submit a summary of the discussion, including the specific feedback the professor provided regarding the research proposal. It is important to plan ahead and schedule the meeting at the faculty member's convenience (e.g., during office hours).

The goal is to have students build working relationships with UNLV faculty and to receive invaluable suggestions from experts in their fields.

### ***Preliminary Research Paper (25%)***

**DUE DATE: Monday, 12/12 via Web Campus**

For the final assignment, students will write an **8-10 page (double-spaced)** preliminary research paper. As a *preliminary* paper for the IDS 495 capstone project, students are required to 1) apply the various methodologies laid out in their proposal to collect primary sources and evaluate them critically and 2) develop a working thesis based on these sources. The preliminary research paper should help students work out any problems with finding sources, using sources to make claims, organization, and writing. Most importantly, it forces students to hone in on answering a specific set of research questions and thus narrow down the scope of their projects. The goal is to demonstrate your ability to conceptualize, conduct, and write scholarly research. This constitutes the final examination.

**\*Assignments are not optional. Students must complete ALL assignments to receive a grade and thus credit for the course.**

**\*All paper must be double-spaced, 12 pt font size, Times New Roman font, and 1" margins all around. Failure to format your paper to meet these guidelines will result in a deduction of points for the assignment.**

### **GRADE SCALE**

A = 93-100, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-72, D+ = 67-69, D = 63-66, D- = 60-62, F = 1-59

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance is mandatory. If you have more than FIVE unexcused absences, you will not be able to earn a passing grade. Excused absences include those for documented illness, religious observance, or travel for inter-collegiate athletics. For excused absences, it is your responsibility to provide documentation. At the beginning of each class, I will pass around a sign-in sheet, which will act as the final authority on your presence or absence; it is your responsibility to make sure you've signed it should you arrive late.

### **LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY**

If you submit an assignment after the deadline, I will deduct half a letter grade for each day it is late. For instance, if you turn in a 100-point assignment 3 days late after the deadline I will automatically deduct 15 points before I start grading. I do not accept any assignments after 7 days.

### **LAPTOP POLICY**

You may not use laptops in class under any circumstances (unless you have a documented medical reason). If you happen to bring a laptop with you to campus, it must remain closed and turned off for the duration of the class period. You will therefore need to take notes using paper and pen/pencil.

### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Turn off your cell phone when entering the classroom. Do not put it on vibrate, turn it off. Anyone receiving, sending, or reading text messages during class will lose points for participation.

### **SYLLABUS UPDATES**

The syllabus is subject to change. Any revisions to the syllabus will be announced during class. It is your responsibility to be aware of these changes.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE, READING ASSIGNMENTS, & DEADLINES**

*Unless otherwise noted, reading assignments will be due the Monday of the week they are assigned. Make sure to bring physical copies of the reading assignments to class.*

## **PART I: INQUIRY AS CONVERSATION**

### **Week 1. Introduction to Interdisciplinary Inquiry**

8/29 Introduction to Course Goals; What is “Interdisciplinary Inquiry?”

8/31 Demystifying Academic Conversations/Critical Source Reviews

Required Readings due Wednesday:

Graff et al., *They Say/I Say*, pp. 1-29 (Introduction & Ch. 1)

Recommended Readings:

Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, pp. pp. 35-50 (Ch. 3)

### **Week 2. “They Say”: Entering Academic Conversations**

9/5 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY RECESS

9/7 Entering Academic Conversations

Required Readings due Wednesday:

Michael Pollan, “Escape from the Western Diet,” in *They Say/I Say*, pp. 420-427

Mary Maxfield, “Food as Thought: Resisting the Moralization of Eating”, in *They Say/I Say*, pp. 442-447

David H. Freedman, “How Junk Food Can End Obesity,” in *They Say/I Say*, pp. 506-537

### **Week 3. Reading Like a Scholar and the Art of Summarizing**

9/12 Analyzing and Engaging Academic Writing **[SOURCE REVIEW #1 DUE]**

9/14 The Art of Summarizing and Quoting

Required Readings:

361-372

Read selected academic source #1

Recommended Readings:

#### **Week 4. "I Say": Distinguishing What You Say From What "They Say"**

9/19 Distinguishing What You Say from What "They Say" [SOURCE REVIEW #2 DUE]

9/21 "So What?": Saying Why It Matters/Research Problem Discussion

Required Readings:

Graff et al., *They Say/I Say*, pp. 55-77 (Ch. 4 & Ch. 5)

Paul Krugman, "Confronting Inequality," in *They Say/I Say*, pp. 561-580

Read selected academic source #2

Recommended Readings:

Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, pp. 139-151 (Ch. 10)

#### **Week 5. Stating the Research Problem**

9/26 Research Problem Discussion [SOURCE REVIEW #3 DUE]

9/28 Research Problem Discussion

Required Readings:

Graff et al., *They Say/I Say*, pp. 78-101 (Ch. 6 & Ch. 7)

Read selected academic source #3

#### **Week 6. Stating the Research Problem (cont'd)**

10/3 Research Problem Discussion [SOURCE REVIEW #4 DUE]

10/5 Research Problem Discussion

Required Readings:

Read selected academic source #4

#### **Week 7. Stating the Research Problem (cont'd)**

10/10 Research Problem Discussion [SOURCE REVIEW #5 DUE]

10/12 Research Problem Discussion

Required Readings:

Read selected academic source #5

#### **Week 8. The Art of Synthesizing**

10/17 The Art of Synthesizing: Critical Literature Review [SOURCE REVIEW #6 DUE]

10/19 NO CLASS

Required Readings:

Read selected academic source #6

\*Becky Nicolaides and Andrew Weise, *The Suburb Reader*, 1-10

\*Christine Haynes, Sample Critical Literature Review

## **PART II: INQUIRY AS RESEARCH**

### **Week 9. The Revised Research Proposal**

10/24 The Revised Research Proposal **CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW DUE!**

10/26 Sources, Methods, Methodology: The Preliminary Research Paper

### **Week 10. Evaluating Research Proposals**

10/31 Evaluating Research Proposals

11/2 Peer-Review Revised Research Proposals **REVISED RESEARCH PROPOSAL DUE!**

Readings:

\*Sample Undergraduate Research Proposals

### **Week 11. NO CLASS: Individual Meetings and Independent Research**

11/7 20-minute Scheduled Meeting with Dr. Bock

11/9 20-minute Scheduled Meeting with Dr. Bock

### **Week 12. NO CLASS: Individual Meetings and Independent Research (cont'd)**

11/14 20-minute Scheduled Meeting with Dr. Bock

11/16 20-minute Scheduled Meeting with Dr. Bock

### **Week 13. Writing Preliminary Research and Making Claims**

11/21 20-minute Scheduled Meeting with Dr. Bock **FACULTY MEETING REPORT DUE!**

11/23 NO CLASS – HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

### **Week 14. Writing Preliminary Research and Making Claims (cont'd)**

11/28 Planning, Drafting, and Writing

11/30 Research Limitations and New Questions

Recommended Readings:

Booth et al., *The Craft of Research*, pp. 177-202 (Ch. 12-13)

## **Week 15. Building on Preliminary Research**

12/5 Building on Preliminary Research in IDS 495: Interdisciplinary Capstone

12/7 Writing Workshop: Drafts-in-Progress

## **Finals Week**

12/12 **PRELIMINARY RESEARCH PAPER DUE BY 5 PM VIA WEBCAMPUS**

**Academic Misconduct**—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution.

An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

**Copyright**—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves **with** and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. **You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

**Religious Holidays Policy**—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the **instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses**, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state

<http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

**Transparency in Learning and Teaching**—The University encourages application of the transparency method of constructing assignments for student success. Please see these two links for further information:

**<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/teachingandlearning>**

**<https://www.unlv.edu/provost/transparency>**

**Incomplete Grades**—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student’s control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving “I” grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

**Tutoring and Coaching**—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call 702-895-3177. The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of the SSC (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TEB second floor.

**UNLV Writing Center**—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student’s Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.

**Rebelmail**—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students’ Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV’s official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students’ e-mail prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always [@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:@unlv.nevada.edu). **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

**Final Examinations**—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at:

**Any other class specific information**—(e.g., absences, make-up exams, status reporting, extra credit policies, plagiarism/cheating consequences, policy on electronic devices, specialized department or college tutoring programs, bringing children to class, policy on recording classroom lectures, etc.)

**Library statement:**

Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. For this class, the Subject Librarian is [https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians\\_by\\_subject](https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.