



Course GISC 7387.001.08s. Research Design in GIS

Professor Dr. Daniel A. Griffith, Ashbel Smith Professor of Geospatial Information Sciences

Term Spring 2007 (Jan. 8-April 28)

Meetings Tue. 4-6:45pm, GR 3.402

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Office Hours TBA

Other Information I do not read WebCT mail.

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions Graduate student status.

Course Description

This course familiarizes graduate students in geospatial information sciences (GIS) with a range of appropriate ways for designing and proposing GIS research projects, including archival, experimental, observational/correlational, qualitative, quasi-experimental, simulation, and survey methodologies. In doing so, a student is encouraged to develop research skills facilitating critical reading of the GIS literature. A secondary goal is to have each student prepare a draft research proposal, one that is applicable to a geospatial problem that could be addressed in a master's thesis (master's students) or dissertation (doctoral students) project. After completing this course, a student should have an initial draft of the proposal for her/his GIS master's project or doctoral dissertation. This course prepares a doctoral student for *GISC 7389: GI Sciences Ph.D. Research Project Qualifier*, whose purpose is to "draft [a] dissertation research proposal" that his/her committee needs to accept as a precursor to taking a qualifying examination and defending the proposal.

Learning Outcomes

- Converse with faculty about basic GIS research topics.
- Understand why GIS research is conducted.
- Explain the principal social science research methodologies.
- Differentiate between the principal social science research methodologies.
- Select an appropriate research design for a given research project.
- Know how to undertake a literature review.
- Know how to critique research proposals and papers.
- Know how to prepare a position paper.
- Develop a research proposal for a master's or doctoral project.

Required Texts & Materials

Locke, L., W. Spirduso, and S. Silverman, 2000, *Proposals that Work*, 4th ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
Sigma Xi, 1999, *The Responsible Researcher: Paths and Pitfalls*. Research Triangle Park, NC: Sigma Xi.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

1/ 8	<p><u>What is geospatial information science research? What is the function of a proposal?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the nature of research: types of data gathering - data, information, and evidence - logical arguments <p>allocate NSF proposals</p> <p>assignment for Lecture #2:</p> <p>read Chapter 1 ("The function of the proposal")</p> <p>send an e-mail from your individual computer account to me</p> <p>prepare to lead seminar discussion on your selected NSF proposal evaluation</p>
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1/15	<p><u>Discussion of NSF proposals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a critique? <p>allocate social science research articles from <i>Social Science Research</i> (2nd ed.) & <i>Practical Problems in Research Methods</i></p> <p>assignment for Lecture #3: prepare to lead seminar discussion on your selected articles</p>
1/22	<p><u>Discussion of selected social science research articles</u></p> <p>assignment for Lecture #4: read Chapter 2 ("Doing the right thing") read <i>The Responsible Researcher</i> (Preface, Chapters 1, 3, 10-12)</p>
1/ 29	<p><u>(Academic) ethics in geospatial research</u></p> <p>assignment for Lecture #5: prepare to lead seminar discussion on your critique write a critique of Smith, <i>Progress in Human Geography</i>: 1997 (pp. 583-590), 1998 (pp. 15-38), and 1999 (pp. 119-125)—with special reference to IRB concerns (http://www.utdallas.edu/research/compliance/irb/policies.html)</p>
2/ 5	<p><u>Philosophy and methodology in geospatial research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - present critiques <p>assignment for Lecture #6: read Chapter 3 ("Developing the thesis or dissertation proposal")</p>
2/12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - archival/secondary source research - the role of pilot studies, activism and fieldwork in geographic research <p><u>Quantitative approaches to research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sampling and questionnaire design - designing geographic experiments - correlational analysis: studying previously collected numerical spatial data - simulation experimentation <p>Research methods in computing</p> <p>assignment for Lecture #7: read Chapter 5 ("Preparation of proposals for qualitative research") write a draft methodological section for a proposal</p>
2/19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a position paper? <p><u>Qualitative approaches to research</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sampling and interviews: "tell me about ..." - simulation: focus groups and role playing - textual analysis - analyzing categorical spatial data <p>assignment for Lecture #8: read Chapter 4 ("Content of the proposal") write a methodological section for a proposal, emphasizing the benefits and drawbacks of employing the selected research design</p>
2/ 26	<p><u>The content of a proposal</u></p> <p>assignment for Lecture #9: read "Fragmentation around a defended core: the territoriality of geography"</p>
3/ 4	<p><u>Discussion of the territoriality of geography</u></p> <p>*** distribute mid-term examination ***</p>
3/ 11	Spring break
3/18 & 25	mid-term examination
4/ 1	<p>write an introduction to a research proposal, contextualizing it in terms of <i>Geography in American: At the Dawn of the 21st Century</i></p> <p>assignment for Lecture #12: read and critique Part III (Proposal 1, Proposal 2, Proposal 3)</p>
4/ 8	<u>Discussion of specimen proposals</u>

4/15	<u>Discussion of specimen proposals (continued)</u> assignment for <i>Lecture #14</i>: read Chapter 6 ("Style and form in writing the proposal") & "The science of scientific writing"
4/22	<u>Careful writing</u> : clear, simple, concise and engaging; overall organization, wording, flow, spell-checking, and copyediting—students should not depend upon faculty to be their co-authors or copyeditors assignment for <i>oral presentation</i>: read Chapter 7 ("The oral presentation")
Exam dates	Mid-term examination: 3/18 & 25; Proposal presentation (Final exam): 4/29.

Course Policies

Grading (credit) Criteria	e-mail connection: P/F 3 written assignments @ 5% each = 15% 1 mid-term examination @ 20% 1 oral presentation of a final proposal @ 30% 1 written final proposal @ 35%																				
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>A+</td> <td>97 - 100</td> <td>B+</td> <td>87-89</td> <td>C+</td> <td>75-79</td> </tr> <tr> <td rowspan="3">course grading:</td> <td>A</td> <td>93 - 97</td> <td>B</td> <td>83-86</td> <td>C</td> <td>70-74</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A-</td> <td>90 - 92</td> <td>B-</td> <td>80-82</td> <td>C-</td> <td>60-69</td> </tr> </table>		A+	97 - 100	B+	87-89	C+	75-79	course grading:	A	93 - 97	B	83-86	C	70-74	A-	90 - 92	B-	80-82	C-	60-69
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A-		90 - 92	B-	80-82	C-	60-69															
Make-up Exams		An exam cannot be made up without a legitimate excuse accompanied by proper formal documentation (e.g., a doctor's excuse).																			
Extra Credit	Extra credit is not available because it tends to interfere with a student's focusing upon completing assignments for the course, and permits students to choose not to or to poorly complete selected assignments designed as part of the course.																				
Late Work	Work will not be accepted late without a legitimate excuse accompanied by proper formal documentation (e.g., a doctor's excuse).																				
Class Attendance	Each student is expected to attend every lecture, and will be excused from doing so only for legitimate reasons that are accompanied by the provision of proper formal documentation (e.g., a doctor's excuse). Each student has the responsibility to access all information presented during a missed class session from other sources; the faculty instructor is not responsible for ensuring that students have missed materials. Furthermore, each student is expected to actively participate, which means to do more than just show up and occupy a seat in the classroom. Rather, students are expected to arrive to class ON TIME and to be properly and fully prepared to participate in class discussions and/or exercises.																				
Classroom Citizenship	Students arriving to a class session after it has begun are expected to enter quietly and take a seat in the least disruptive manner; student leaving a class session early are expected to do so in the least disruptive manner. Students are expected to display a positive attitude toward learning by conducting themselves with civility, respect for others (e.g., sharing thoughts and actively listening to the thoughts and comments of peers and the instructor), and general good, courteous behavior, including not engaging in cell phone (which should be silenced), personal movies/TV and personal newspaper (or other reading materials) usage, and not participating in social discussion groups during class time.																				
Student Conduct and Discipline	The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, <i>A to Z Guide</i> , which is provided to all registered students each academic year. The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the <i>Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3</i> , and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's <i>Handbook of Operating Procedures</i> . Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).																				

	<p>A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.</p>
Academic Integrity	<p>The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.</p> <p>Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.</p> <p><i>Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.</i></p>
E-mail Use	<p>The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.</p>
Withdrawal from Class	<p>The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.</p>
Student Grievance Procedures	<p>Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's <i>Handbook of Operating Procedures</i>.</p> <p>In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the deal will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.</p> <p>Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.</p>
Incomplete Grades	<p>As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of <u>F</u>.</p>
Disability Services	<p>The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and</p>

	<p>Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.</p> <p>The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is: The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22 PO Box 830688 Richardson, Texas 75083-0688 (972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)</p> <p>Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example, a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.</p> <p>It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.</p>
<p>Religious Holy Days</p>	<p>The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.</p> <p>The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.</p> <p>If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.</p>
<p>Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities</p>	<p>Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean.</p>

NOTE: These descriptions/timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.