Syllabus

Instructor Information

Names: Dr. Irma Alonso and Dr. Krish Jayachandran

Email: Contact me through the e-mail available in WebCT. Expect a reply within 48 hours. alonsoi@fiu.edu, jayachan@fiu.edu

Office location: DM-318A (Dr. Alonso) ECS 337 (Dr. Jay)

Office hours: TR 10:45 - 12:30 (Dr. Alonso), TR 2.00 – 4.00 (Dr. Jay) and by appointment.

Phone: 305-348-2318 (Dr. Alonso) 305-348-6553 (Dr. Jay)

Biography: Ph.D. in Economics from the University of York, England. Interested in Women's Studies, Caribbean Studies, and Quantitative Methods (Dr. Alonso)
Ph.D. in Plant Pathology from Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS. Expertise in Environmental Sciences – Microbiology, Soils, Plants, and Water (Dr. Jay)

Course Information

Course title: Aesthetics, Values, and Authority: Explorations in Research

Course number: IDH 3005-IDH3006

Course description: This course serves as a third year seminar of the Honors College, and it is related to the Student Research and Artistic Initiative of the Honors College. This course is inter-disciplinary and will involve the participation of various professors from different fields, librarians, and curators.

An important objective of the seminar is to provide students with an appreciation of the research and artistic environments at FIU. This will entail visiting a selection of different research labs and creative spaces, to get a "feel" for the "who" and the "what" of research and artistic pursuits in those labs and creative spaces.

An additional objective of the course is to give students the opportunity of making effective presentations of their research efforts. Students presenting their papers and projects at the Annual Research Day, the Honors Convocation, and national and international conferences, the last of which will be underwritten by the College, will achieve this.

Course date: Tuesday, August 30, 2005 through Thursday, December 8, 2005

Location: PC- 432

Meeting day(s): TR

Meeting time(s): 12:30-13:45

Course Goals

Course goals: In this course we have the following goals:

1. To expose students to different research methods followed in various disciplines as well as to expose them to distinctive artistic initiatives.
2. To offer the tools needed to utilize library and Internet reference resources and services.
3. To offer the students the opportunity to participate in the learning community by presenting major research findings in academic conferences/exhibitions/competitions/etc.
4. To fulfill FIU requirements of getting students involved in oral class presentations and undertaking research over the Internet.
5. To get students involved with the activities of The Honors College as they relate to our class.

Academic Integrity

Procedures:
FIU is a learning community and we are expected to act as moral beings governed by a sense of ethics. The University’s Code of Academic Integrity was adopted by the Student Government Association on November 28, 2001 and reflects the values articulated in the Student Code of Standards.

In this course we follow these standards, and if you decide not to comply with them, you will be recommended for expulsion from FIU.

Citing from a letter to all students from Dr. Ken Johnson we get an explanation of the two most frequent instances of academic misconduct:

**Cheating:**
... which is the unauthorized use of books, notes, aids or assistance from another person with respect to examinations course assignments, filed service reports, class recitations or possession of examination papers of course materials whether originally authorized or not. Any Student helping another cheat may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

**Plagiarism:**
... consisting of the deliberate use and appropriation of another’s work without any indication of the source and the passing off of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas or materials taken from another is guilty of plagiarism. Any Student helping another to plagiarize may be found guilty of academic misconduct. (*Student Handbook* p. 136)

Students who are brought up on charges of academic misconduct face possible penalties that range from failure of the course to expulsion from FIU.

**Office of Disability Services**

If you have a disability and need assistance, please contact the Office of Disability Services for Students (University Park - GC190; Ph 305-348-3532)-(North Campus -W-UC 139, Ph. 305-919-5305). Upon contact, the Office of Disability Services for Students will review your request and contact your professors or other personnel to make arrangements for appropriate modification and/or assistance.

**Course Requirements**

**Introduction:** Grading in this course will come from various sources.

**Requirements:** During the Fall semester, students will be evaluated as follows:

1. Class participation and involvement in the topics under discussion (10%)
2. Reviews of two articles from research journals (15%).
3. Search for Summer undergraduate research programs to select an activity of interest and to start an initial proposal for Summer 2006 (5%).
4. Active participation in the workshops prepared by the FIU Librarians (15%)
5. Reviews of the presentations by the various researches discussing the methods followed in their respective disciplines (15%).
6. Select to participate in at least three of the field work activities planned for this term: (a) Attendance to the Lecture and review of the Opening Exposition at the Frost Museum on Friday September 23/05: The Saint Makers (b) University Park Sculpture Tours, Oct 14/05 and Nov 8/05 (c) visit to the Wolfsonian Museum with presentations by librarians and curators on Friday Sept 9/05 and on Friday November 18/05. (15%)
7. SPSS Assignments (10%).
8. Attendance and submitting reports of activities of the Honors College: (a) Honors College Convocation, Monday Sept. 26/05
(b) Fall Excellence Lecture, Thursday Nov. 10/05
(c) at least two of the Honors Hour during the semester, Wednesdays at 12:30
(d) Submission of an abstract for a paper or a poster at the 2006 SRAI conference at FIU.(10%)

Calendar - Fall 2005

Important dates:
- Aug. 29 - Classes begin
- Sept. 5 - Labor Day - University closed
- Sept. 29 - Visit of recruiters from the CIA
- Sept. 26 - Honors College Convocation
- Nov 10 - Fall Excellence Lecture
- Nov 5 - Last date to drop a course
- Nov. 11 - Veteran's Day, University closed
- Nov. 23-25 - Thanksgiving, University closed
- Dec. 9 - Classes end

Textbook:
Although no official textbook will be used in this course, the textbook by W. Trochim (2000), *The Research Methods Knowledge Base, 2nd Edition*, Cincinnati, OH: Atomic Dog Publishing, is an excellent source of reference. This knowledge base (KB) textbook, used at Cornell, is a "comprehensive web-based textbook that addresses all of the topics in a typical introductory undergraduate or graduate course in social research methods. It covers the entire research process including: formulating research questions; sampling (probability and nonprobability); measurement (surveys, scaling, qualitative, unobtrusive); research design (experimental and quasi-experimental); data analysis; and, writing the research paper.... It also addresses the major theoretical and philosophical underpinning of research including: the idea of validity in research; reliability of measures; and ethics... It is a fully hyperlink text that can be integrated easily into an existing course structure..." It is available at: 
http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/index.htm

Lesson 1
Lesson: What are the different research methods?
Objectives or Goals: To identify early steps in research.
Topics: Identify strengths and limitations of each of the following research methods:
1. Experimental
2. Correlation
3. Naturalistic Observation
4. Surveys
5. Case Study.
Assignments:
1. Submit the online tutorial offered by Research Methods in the Social and the Natural Sciences available at: http://www.mcli.dist.maricopa.edu/proj/res_meth/
2. Submit the online tutorial of Welcome to the Research Methods WWW tutorial, available at: http://sociology.camden.rutgers.edu/main.htm
Due date: Thursday Sept. 8/05

Lesson 2
Lesson: Foundations of Research
Objectives or Goals: To study the major issues in research and in evaluation.
Topics: 1. Language of Research
2. Philosophy of Research
3. Ethics in Research
4. Conceptualizing
5. Evaluation Research
Readings: M. Trochin, *Research Methods Knowledge Base, Foundations*

Assignments: Making use of the Research Methods Tutorials, offered by The Web Center for Social Research Methods, the students will be divided into five groups to discuss the topics of:
1. Language of Research, Sept. 8/05
2. Philosophy of Research, Sept. 13/05
3. Ethics in Research Sept 15/05,
4. Conceptualizing, Sept. 22/05 and
5. Evaluation Research, Sept 27/05.

Lesson 3

Lesson: Library and Internet Searches
Objectives or Goals: To get students to acquire skills needed to undertake research using library and Internet resources.
Topics: Tuesday, Sept. 6 - Session 1
Tuesday, Sept. 20 - Session 2
Thursday, Oct. 6 - Session 3
Tuesday, Oct. 18 - Session 4
Tuesday, Nov 1 - Session 5
Tuesday, Nov 15 - Session 6

Assignments: Active participation in the activities designed by the FIU Librarians.
Due dates: As assigned by the Librarians
The Seminar will meet at GL-280, during regular class time.

Lesson 4

Lesson: Seeking research opportunities
Objectives or Goals: To explore research opportunities with various private and governmental institutions.
Topics: Identify research opportunities, fellowships, employment, internships, assistantships, training or grants that you can apply for.
Assignments: 1. Carry out a Google search of the 2005 or 2006 Summer Research Programs for Undergraduates.
2. From your search results, select a program you could apply to for Summer 2006.
3. Find as much information as possible about this program so that you can proceed with the application process once it gets started.
4. Due date: Thursday Sept 15/04

Lesson 5

Lesson: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)
Objectives or Goals: To learn a statistical package by the use of guided exercises.
Topics: 1. Learning the basics of SPSS. Due date: Tuesday Oct 11/05
2. Looking at Frequency Distributions and Descriptive Statistics. Due date: Tuesday Oct 25/05
3. Presenting Data in Graphic Form. Due date: Tuesday Nov 8/05
Note: The other assignments will be undertaken next term.

Lesson 6

Lesson: Examples of Research in the Social Sciences
Objectives or Goals: To expose students to professional researchers in the field of the Social and Behavioral Sciences.
Topics: 1. Dr. Leyda Benitez, Oct. 11
2. Dr. Eric Wagner, Oct. 13
3. Dr. Lesley DeChurch, Oct. 20
4. Dr. Consuelo Boronat, Oct. 25
5. Dr. Manuel Carvajal Oct. 27

Assignments: Write a report evaluating, comparing and contrasting the research methods followed by the various researchers.
Due date: Nov 1/05

---

**Lesson 7**

**Lesson:** Examples of Research Methods in the Natural Sciences

**Objectives or Goals:** To expose students to the methods and procedures followed in the natural sciences.

**Topics:**
1. Dr. R. Bone, Nov. 3
2. Eric Crumpler, Nov 17
3. Dr. K. Jayachandran, Nov. 22

Assignments: Write a report evaluating, comparing and contrasting research methods presented.
Due date: Nov 29/05.

---

**Lesson 8**

**Lesson:** Field Trips

**Objectives or Goals:** To develop an appreciation of the research and artistic environments at FIU.

**Topics:**
1. Frost Museum: The Saint Makers, Sept. 23/05, opening ceremony at 8:00 pm.
2. Frost Museum: Sculpture Park tours:
   - Tuesday Oct 14/05 and Tuesday Nov 8/05
3. Wolfsonian Museum: to explore research opportunities using the resources of the Museum. Presentations to be given by the Librarians and the Curators of the Museum:
   - Friday Sept 9/05. Time TBA
   - Friday Nov 18/05. Time TBA.

Assignments: Write a report evaluating, comparing and contrasting research methods presented.
Due date: December 1/05.

---

**Lesson 9**

**Lesson:** Reading a Research Article

**Objectives or Goals:** To get students to identify the different steps followed in research.

**Topics:** Reading a Research Article:
In this activity you will choose two empirical studies from journals of your interest.
1. Write an "overview" or brief summary of the article. Indicate your assessment of what the study is about and the major findings of the study.
2. According to the introduction, what information was already known about the topic (look for references to previous research).
3. What variables were studied? What were the hypotheses concerning these variables?
4. Who were the participants in this study? Were there any special participant characteristics?
5. What were the procedures used to test the hypotheses? Did you notice any problematic features of the procedure?
6. Was the experimental or nonexperimental method used? Were there attempts to control any extraneous variables?
7. What were the major results of the study? Were the results consistent with the hypotheses?
8. How do the results relate to the other studies cited in the introduction?
9. How did the researcher interpret the results? Can you think of alternative interpretations?
10. Did the author give suggestions for future research or applications? Can you provide other suggestions?
11. What would you do if you wished to find out more about this research topic?


**Assignments:**
Due dates:
- Written reports of both articles: Tuesday Nov. 29/05
- Oral presentations and class discussions of both articles: Nov. 29/05, Dec. 1/05, Dec. 6/05, Dec. 8/05

| Lesson 10 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| **Lesson:** Activities of The Honors College |
| **Objectives or Goals:** To get students involved in the activities of The Honors College. |
| **Topics:** | |
| 1. Honors College Convocation, Sept 26/05 |
| 2. Fall Excellence Lecture, Nov 10/05 |
| 3. Participate in at least two of the activities of Honors Hour, Wednesdays at 12:30 pm |
| 4. Submission of an abstract for a paper or a poster presentation at the 2006 SRAI conference at FIU (Dec 7/05). |
| **Assignments:** Deadline: Submit a report evaluating your experience in the participation of the activities of The Honors College, December 8/05. |

**Grade Distribution**

*Incomplete grades* are given only in cases of medical emergencies with proper documentation from the FIU Health Clinic.