

INFORMATION / RESEARCH / ANALYSIS

Honors 3500 / 3990

Spring 2015

Day/Time: TR 11:00-12:15 pm

Location: Bizzini Hall / Classroom Building C-131A



Prof. Ellen E. Bell
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Office hours:
T: 1:00-4:00 pm C-215B
and by appointment

Tim Held, Librarian
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Office hours:
T 1-4:30p, TH 9-10, F 1-4

COURSE DESCRIPTION

(From the Catalog) Application-based introduction to information resources, with attention to issues of access and evaluation. Emphasis on learning how to conduct efficient and effective information searches and acquiring knowledge of basic research protocols. Includes independent research/discussions with research mentor leading to a provisional research proposal for Honors Thesis or Capstone Project. 3 Units. Satisfies G.E. area E1. (Spring of junior year.)

(From the Professors) HONS 3500 is designed to support Honors students as you lay the groundwork for your Capstone Project in the senior year. The focus of the course will be on the deep exploration of topics of interest to you within the context of differing disciplines and methods of research. Emphasis is on developing flexibility and curiosity in investigating and determining questions for researchable study and on deepening knowledge by reading further “into” your selected topic. During the first weeks of the semester, you will discover creative methods of approaching and answering research questions, as well as responding to questions about research posed by your professors and peers. The later weeks of the course will be devoted to gaining a deep, nuanced understanding of your chosen topic and developing a research prospectus and literature review. You will work in like-discipline cohorts and in consultation with the faculty to understand your topic, its relevance to broader questions, what others interested in it have discovered, and what the next (i.e. your) questions should be. By the end of the course you

will have an extensive annotated bibliography, a poster that explores and presents your topic and its relevance, and a Prospectus for your Capstone Project. You will also have developed finely honed research skills, and (we hope) a passion for research and writing that will carry you through your Senior year and beyond.

GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Subject Knowledge: To provide an educational experience that will enhance students' understanding of the discipline's basic principles, methodologies, and perspectives.
2. Communication: To provide an educational experience that will enhance the ability to communicate.
3. Inquiry and Critical Thinking: To provide an educational experience that will enhance critical thinking skills and will contribute to continuous inquiry and life-long learning.
4. Information Retrieval and Evaluation: To provide an educational experience that will enhance the ability to find, understand, examine critically, and use information from various sources.
5. Interdisciplinary Relationships: To provide an educational experience that will enhance students' understanding of a discipline's interrelationships with other disciplines.
6. Global or Multicultural Perspectives: To provide an educational experience that will enhance students' understanding of a discipline's impact on or connection to global affairs, AND/OR
7. Social Responsibility: To provide an educational experience that will help students understand the complexity of ethical judgment and social responsibility and/or that will describe the discipline's impact on or connections to social and ethical issues.

COURSE-SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. After exploring how their questions fit into discipline-specific frames, students will choose a topic to research in preparation for the Honors Senior Capstone Project.
2. Craft a topic into a research prospectus.
3. Research this prospectus by accessing and evaluating library and non-library sources.
4. After learning how research is conducted in their field of interest, students will write a Capstone Project Prospectus by formulating a thesis and incorporating discipline-specific methods and sources in proper discipline style.
5. Students will explain a research methodology to a general audience.
6. Students will improve skills and confidence in the "messy" research process.
7. Students will demonstrate effective teamwork by solving common research problems through shared expertise.
8. Upon completion of the course, students will demonstrate a range of research skills and the ability to write a well-supported research prospectus.
9. Students will communicate their research graphically in a poster presented at the Honors Capstone Research Conference.

General Education: E1

Prerequisites: Junior standing, good standing in the Honors program, or consent of the professors.

RECOMENDED TEXTBOOK

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams

2008 *The Craft of Research*. 3rd Edition. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

ISBN-13: 9780226065663

Also available as a free ebook through the CSU Stanislaus library.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Students will be graded based on their scores on the following required assignments:

- 25% Weekly Research Journal & other Assignments/In-Class Activities (Tuesday / Bell)
- 25% Weekly Homework and In-Class Activities (Thursday / Held)
- 15% Annotated Research Bibliography
- 15% Research Poster
- 20% Research Prospectus

****Please note**** HONS 3990 (1 unit) students are required to attend only the Tuesday class meetings and complete the Tuesday assignments, the poster assignments, and the prospectus assignments (your poster and prospectus will, of course, include properly formatted citations). You are welcome to sit in on the Thursday sessions—please see Tim if you'd like to do so.

The +/- system **WILL** be used for this course. On a 100 point scale, final letter grades will be assigned as follows: A (94+), A- (90-93.9), B+ (87-89.9), B (84-86.9), B- (80-83.9), C+ (77-79.9), C (74-76.9), C- (70-73.9), D+ (67-69.9), D (64-66.9), D- (60-63.9); F (0-59.9). Please note that a grade of C- (70%) or higher is required for credit to be granted for those enrolled under the Credit / No Credit option.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1.) **Readings:** Most of the reading you will do in this class will be specific to your research topic. You are expected to dedicate a significant amount of your homework time for this class to reading (and thinking!) about your topic. You will read the sources you find carefully and thoughtfully, interrogating each to gain the deep understanding you need to understand your topic, its context and importance, and the questions you should ask about it in your Capstone Project. Additional readings to support this process and class discussion will be posted on Blackboard and/or announced in class.

2.) **Weekly Research Journal, Homework and In-Class Activities:** In addition to the three writing assignments listed on the tentative schedule (annotated bibliography, poster, prospectus), you will complete brief weekly assignments for both the Tuesday and Thursday class meetings. The bulk of the Tuesday assignments will be completed by keeping a research journal. This journal will help you record and organize the information you gather, chart the development of your thinking on your topic, and track the time you spend delving into it. Additional instructions (and templates) will be provided during the Tuesday class meetings. The assignments for the Thursday class meetings focus on research skills and command of information technologies. Assignments for both the Tuesday and Thursday class meetings will be made in class and posted on Blackboard. These assignments are designed to help you stay on top of the work that will be required to complete the annotated bibliography, poster, and prospectus and to build strong research skills. Unless otherwise noted, assignments made in the Tuesday classes (usually by Ellen Bell) will be due the following Tuesday; those made in the Thursday classes (usually by Tim Held) will be due the following Thursday.

3.) **Research Poster:** (Draft due April 28; final version due May 7) You will create a poster for presentation in class and at the Honors Capstone Conference (tentatively scheduled for Friday, May 15 in the Faculty Development Center on campus). The poster will summarize your findings to date (topic, relevance, potential research questions) Poster guidelines will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

4.) **Annotated Bibliography:** (Due April 23) This is a written document that provides citation information and an assessment of the sources you have explored. The citation information will be provided in correctly formatted MLA or APA style as will the annotations. The bibliography will help you keep track of your sources and the information they provide, and it will provide the foundation for the References or Works Cited list in your Research Prospectus. Additional instructions will be provided in the Thursday class meetings.

5.) **Research Prospectus:** (Drafts due March 17 and April 14; final version due May 21) This is a written representation of the intellectual journey you've taken throughout the semester and a preliminary road-map for its continuation as you prepare your Honors Capstone Project (and possibly an Honors Thesis—ask about this option if you are interested in it). It should present your research topic, the strides others have made in their investigation of it (i.e. a literature review), the relevance of the topic (i.e. why you—and others—find it interesting and worthy of study), a potential research question, and the research methods that can be effectively used to explore it. It will conclude with a properly formatted Works Cited or References list that includes all of the sources discussed in the body of the prospectus. Successful proposals (A & B grades) will state the research question clearly and succinctly; present sufficient background information to contextualize the question; make original, well-supported, and persuasive arguments about the importance and feasibility of the project; and include a clear, well-organized, and feasible research methodology. Successful papers will also be at least 5 typed, double-spaced pages in length (not including title page, Works Cited, or References lists), well-written, free of grammatical and spelling errors, and cite sources properly. All prospectuses will be graded for argument, organizational structure, mechanical correctness, and accuracy and relevance of citations.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism—All work submitted must be your own, and all sources on which you draw to produce that work must be properly credited. Absolutely no infractions of the academic honesty policy (<http://www.csustan.edu/JudicialAffairs>) will be tolerated. In *addition* to any administrative disciplinary actions, any student caught plagiarizing, cheating, or otherwise violating the academic honesty policy will be given an F for the assignment and, at the discretion of the professors, may *fail the entire course*.

Students with Disabilities—if you have a disability that requires classroom or test accommodations, please see one of us as soon as possible. If you haven't done so already, you should contact the Disability Resource Center (MSR-210, Tel. 209-667-3159, TTY 209-667-3044), which is responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. All information and documentation of disability is strictly confidential.

Ellen Bell's Office Hours—Office hours are set aside for you—please take advantage of them! If you have any questions about the course material, assignments, your research topic, etc. please stop by my office during office hours to talk (Classroom Bldg. 215D and IC-100 by appointment). Outside of office hours, the best way to reach me is by email (eebell@csustan.edu). If you can't make it to office hours, we can schedule another time to meet or to talk on the phone.

Tim Held's Office Hours—I am on campus 8:00am – 4:30pm, five days per week, so you can usually find me outside of office hours to discuss your research and library resources. Email ahead of time to be sure of meeting with me. Also check my schedule at my office to see where I am at any given time.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE****Reading Assignments will be announced in class and on Blackboard****

Week 1

- Jan 27 Welcome and introduction to the course—what is research?
- Jan 29 Exploring a topic

Week 2

- Feb 3 Choosing a topic
- Feb 5 Primary and secondary sources

Week 3

- Feb 10 Working with research problems
- Feb 12 Finding sources in databases

Week 4

- Feb 17 Engaging sources actively—recording and questioning (what works for you?)
- Feb 19 Bell Topic Conferences I

Week 5

- Feb 24 Bell Topic Conferences II
- Feb 26 Finding Books

Week 6

- Mar 3 Topic Conferences III
- Mar 5 Informal information sources

Week 7

- Mar 10 Putting it all together: Planning and writing your draft
- Mar 12 No Thursday class. Conferences with Tim

Week 8

- Mar 17 Writing as a conversation—claims, reasons, evidence, warrants, responses, and hedges
Writing Assignment: Draft 1 of research prospectus due
- Mar 19 Recursive Research

Week 9

- Mar 24 Revising: Organization, argument, content and clarity
- Mar 26 Tim away at professional conference (no class)

Week 10

- Mar 31 *****Cesar Chavez Day—No Class Meeting—Campus Closed*****
- Apr 2 IRB presentation

Apr 7 & 9 *Spring Break—No Class Meetings*****

Week 11

- Apr 14 Filling in the gaps—reading and writing more deeply into your topic
Writing Assignment: Draft 2 of research prospectus due
- Apr 16 Research methods across disciplines

Week 12

- Apr 21 How to communicate information visually
- Apr 23 Plagiarism
Writing Assignment: Final Bibliography due

Week 13

- Apr 28 In-class poster critique: Group I
Writing Assignment: Draft of research poster due (upload file—everyone)
- Apr 30 In-class poster critique: Group II

Week 14

- May 5 Incorporating critiques and suggestions into your project
- May 7 Student Conferences with Tim
Writing Assignment: Final version of research poster due (upload file)

Week 15

- May 12 The ethics of research & moving forward
- May 14 No class meeting—see you at the Honors Capstone Conference on Friday!

Friday, May 15 *Poster Presentation at the Honors Capstone Conference* (12-5pm, FDC)

- May 21 ****Due by 11:00 am (University-Scheduled Final Exam Time)****
Final version of research prospectus (including corrected Bibliography / Works Cited lists)