

IDS 4930- Intro to Research in the Liberal Arts and Sciences



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OVERVIEW

The two goals of this course are: 1. to explore the diversity of undergraduate research activities available to UF students, including local, national, and international experiences; and 2. to equip students with an array of transferrable skills that can be applied in a broad range of research environments. Students will gain research-specific communication skills and research-oriented professionalization strategies. They will also learn how to apply for, obtain, and succeed in a wide variety of funded research opportunities. Special attention will be given to non-traditional research, including multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects.

OBJECTIVES

- communicate effectively with faculty mentors
- demonstrate the attitude, mindset, and professional conduct of a researcher
- compile a list of opportunities and resources for undergraduate research
- write application materials for research, funding, and presentation opportunities
- disseminate research findings in research paper and presentation formats

ASSIGNMENTS

Presentation

In the first week of classes, students will be asked to find one research opportunity—such as a scholarship program, REU, or capstone—that they would like to know more about. Each student will give a 3-minute presentation on the opportunity of their choice. The presentation should feature relevant information, including important dates and deadlines, relevant links, locations, funding and cost information, eligibility requirements, application materials, quantifiable benefits of participation, participant stories and testimonials, interesting facts about the program, etc. A visual component in the form of PowerPoint slides or a printed handout is required. Presentations will be spread out over the course of the semester, according to a schedule that will be determined at the end of week 1. Presentations will be graded in accordance with a presentation rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Application

By the fifth week of class, students will mock-apply to a research opportunity of their choice. The application documents need to be at least 1 single-spaced page in length for the application to qualify for this assignment. For online forms, students should copy the input fields into a word document as headings (i.e., Name, School, Personal Statement, etc.) and fill in their responses as they would on the actual form. Any private, financial, or non-directory information should be omitted. If the deadline for the application happens to overlap with the course, students are encouraged to apply; otherwise, the application can be thought of as a “practice” document for possible future use. Applications will be graded in accordance with an application rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Forums

Periodically during the semester, students will be asked to post to the class forum. Forum posts will typically be assigned as part of classroom activities. Sometimes students will be asked to submit individual posts and other times to work together as a group. As a general rule, posts contributed to the forum will be evaluated for thoughtful completion but will not receive an individual grade. To do well in this category, students should post whenever asked to do so and do their best on each forum assignment. Each student’s overall contribution to the forums will be assessed twice: at midsemester and at end of semester.

Report

At the end of the semester, students will turn in a 1500-word report on a journal, conference, research site, archive, or special collection. The report will be the result of in-depth research into the event, publication, space, or resource of interest. Students can take up a wide array of topics and approaches for this assignment as long as they consult with the instructor to get approval before beginning the project. Research topics might include such things as: the history of a local collection of rare print materials; observable trends in the student work published by a national undergraduate journal; or a demographic survey of participants in an undergraduate symposium. The goal should be to learn something about the research process, culture, or infrastructure that could potentially be useful for the student’s own research career in the immediate future. Reports will be graded in accordance with a rubric (see canvas resources>rubrics).

Participation

Each day, student participation will be observed and qualitatively assessed. Quality of participation includes factors like frequency and value of contributions to class discussions, engagement in group and collaborative work, respectful attention shown during lectures and presentations, and general attitude. To do well in participation, students should try to speak at least once per class, always engage to the best of their ability in class activities, avoid speaking or being off task whenever someone else is addressing the class, and avoid doing or saying anything hostile or disrespectful toward any person in the class. Overall quality of day-to-day participation will be evaluated twice: once at midsemester and once at end of semester.

GRADING

Grading percentages are as follows:

- **Presentation: 10%**
- **Application: 15%**
- **Forums: 20% (10% Midterm; 10% End of term)**
- **Report: 25%**
- **Participation: 30% (15% Midterm; 15% End of term)**

Grading scale:

**A=92.5-100; A-=89.5-92.4; B+=86.5-89.4; B=82.5-86.4; B-=79.5-82.4; C+=76.5-79.4; C=72.5-76.4;
C-=69.5-72.4; D+=66.5-69.4; D=62.5-66.4; D-=59.5-62.4; E=<59.5**

ATTENDANCE

Because 1-hour courses meet less often than 3-hour courses, regular attendance is absolutely necessary to succeed in this class. Unexcused absences after the first one will result in a 3-point deduction from the final course grade (100-point scale). Students wishing to get an absence excused should notify the instructor before the absence if possible or immediately after. They will also need to provide documentation (if applicable) and will be solely responsible for making up any missed work. While students who miss class should always compensate by trying to participate more on other days, it is important to note that participation is a separate, holistic score and does not directly correlate with number of absences.

LATE WORK

Late work will not be accepted except under extenuating circumstances. Students in need of an extension for medical or other reasons should meet with the instructor *prior* to the assignment deadline if possible.

EVALUATIONS

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

DISABILITY NOTICE

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Welcome to Research

M: syllabus; rubrics and due dates; the value of research

W: student panel (CLAS Scholars); reading discussion

Readings: *The Essential Guide*, ch. 1: “Taking the Leap into the Research World”

Week 2: Preliminary Research

M: varieties of research; visit to the special collections room; scavenger hunt

W: faculty guest speaker (laboratory tour); reading discussion

Readings: *Constructing Research Questions*, ch. 2

Week 3: The Research Project

M: research question activity; finding a mentor; how to read an article

W: faculty guest speaker (science writing); reading discussion

Readings: *The Essential Guide*, ch. 5: “Crafting a Research Proposal”

Week 4: Reaching Out

M: literature review; scaling and budgeting; contacting PIs

W: faculty guest speaker (communication); reading discussion

Readings: David G. Oppenheimer, *Getting In*, ch. 6: “Your Application Strategy”

Week 5: Non-Traditional Research

M: DH workshop; participant observation; visit the interdisciplinary research lab

W: student panel (medical arts and humanities); reading discussion

Readings: JUR articles (TBD)

Week 6: Research Writing

M: academic conferences; curating data; JUR activity

W: faculty guest speaker (publishing); reading discussion

Readings: *Scientific Writing = Thinking in Words*, ch. 1: “Thinking about Your Writing”