EDIT 9630 - Critique of Literature in Instructional Technology
Fall 2006

"One of the greatest joys known to man is to take a flight into ignorance in search of knowledge." **- Robert Lynd**

"Besides learning to see, there is another art to be learned .... not to see what is not."
- Maria Mitchell

"Do what you love. Know your own bone; gnaw at it, bury it, unearth it, and gnaw it still.
- Henry David Thoreau

Official Description of EDIT 9630: Research and theoretical literature in instructional technology. Review and evaluation of current research in selected areas is emphasized. A synthesis of the literature in an area of interest is completed by each student.

Overview: This course focuses on the interpretation and analysis of research and theoretical literature in the field of instructional technology. Despite what you may have heard elsewhere, whatever problem you are solving or question you are addressing in your research, you must review the literature in related areas as a precursor to formulating your methodology. This is true regardless of whether you have already decided to conduct a study using quantitative, qualitative, critical, mixed, or any other research methods.

This course is your BIG CHANCE to dive into the literature, WRITE, receive feedback from like-minded colleagues, WRITE SOME MORE, and ultimately come to "KNOW" the theory and research relevant to your question or problem.

Course Tasks: There are four major tasks in the course.

1. Your first task is to prepare an introduction to your literature review that includes a brief overview, a list of the questions that the review will address, and a description of the resources that you intend to use to seek the literature for your review, including search terms. This assignment is due by Monday, September 11.

2. Prepare a first draft of your literature review. This first draft is due by Monday, October 9.

3. Prepare a second draft of your literature review. It is due by Monday, November 20.

4. The final literature review is due no later than Monday, December 11.

Most students today arrive at college assuming that a Google search is the first choice for doing research… - Kate Wittenberg, *Director of the Electronic Publishing Initiative at Columbia* **http://www.epic.columbia.edu/**

Resources:

The assigned textbook is:

Fink, A. (2005). *Conducting research literature reviews: From the internet to paper* (2nd Ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

There are a number of resources on the World Wide Web related to developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and will required to conduct and report a professional review of the research literature. The ones found so far are listed below. Hopefully, the participants in this course will be able to add to this list.

The Literature Review: A Few Tips On Conducting It
http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/litrev.html
This site from the University of Toronto provides some practical advice about conducting a literature review. The home page link on this page also includes good advice on writing in general.

Problem Formation
http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/probform.htm
This is a segment of Professor Trochim's excellent resource web page on Social Science Research.

How to Critically Analyze Information Sources
http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill26.htm
Here is a site from Cornell University with helpful information on conducting a literature review.

The Dissertation Doctor
http://www.dissertationdoctor.com/
Help for any graduate student can be found here! You can even hire a coach!

Writing and Presenting Your Thesis or Dissertation
http://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/
This site from Michigan State professor, Joe Levine, may help you deal with some of the political aspects of surviving the dissertation process.

Ph.D. Support Page
http://www.sss.uq.edu.au/linkto/phdwriting/
This site from the University of Queensland in Australia includes some good advice on conducting a literature review.

On this site, you'll find full text example of doctoral dissertations and masters theses, many related to instructional technology.

[Doctoral Research in Educational Technology: A Directory of Dissertations, 1977-2004](http://cortland.edu/education/dissdir/)
http://cortland.edu/education/dissdir/
On this site, Edward P. Caffarella, Ph.D., Professor and Dean, School of Education, State University of New York College at Cortland, provides a compilation of doctoral dissertations in our field completed during the calendar years 1977 through 2004.

[American Educational Research Association](http://aera.net/)
http://aera.net/
This is the official web site for the American Educational Research Association (AERA), a professional association dedicated to educational research. Student membership is $25.00. The 2007 Annual Meeting will be in Chicago. You don't want to miss this conference!

Assessment:

Grades will be based upon active participation in the course and the quality of the literature review drafts and final paper. We will develop our own rubric for assessment of the literature review. Two rubrics used elsewhere are:
- San Diego State University: http://coe.sdsu.edu/ed690/res/p02_litrevrub.htm
- Indiana University: http://education.indiana.edu/~ist/programs/quals/rlitrev.html

Please use a 12-point font for all written assignments and double space. Drafts of your literature review are expected to conform to the style and format of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.).

Strong writing skills are expected of doctoral students. All students, both native and non-native English speakers, are encouraged to use the services provided through the UGA Writing Center at http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/home.html It is a great resource!

Additional Information:

Face-To-Face and Online Classes
Because most of the work in this course involves reviewing research papers and writing a literature review, we do not need to have many face-to-face class meetings. We will have three face-to-face meetings on Monday, August 21, Monday, October 2, and Monday, December 4. The rest of the sessions will be held online or in one-to-one sessions with Professor Reeves.

Preparation and Participation
Your active participation in this course is essential so plan to come to class meetings on time, prepared, and ready to be challenged. Writing a literature review is not an easy task. Lack of preparation and engagement will detract from your learning enormously.

Attendance/Tardiness

When we meet face-to-face, you are expected to attend class, arrive on time, and stay for the duration of the class. *Please let me know ahead of time if you will be absent or late for class and, if this is not possible, to be in touch with me as soon as you can thereafter.* I can usually be reached via email at treeves@uga.edu or on the phone at 706-542-3849.

Students With Special Needs

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990), The University of Georgia seeks to provide equal access to individuals with disabilities. Students who have a disability and need specific accommodations and support to facilitate full inclusion of all aspects of the course should make an appointment with me during the first week of the term. To register for services, students may go to Disability Services located in Clark Howell Hall (706-542-8719, TTY 706-542-8778, http://www.dissvcs.uga.edu).

Academic Honesty

The University of Georgia seeks to promote and ensure academic honesty and personal integrity among faculty, students and other members of the University Community. A policy on academic honesty has been developed to serve these goals. All members of the academic community are responsible for knowing the policy and procedures on academic honesty. These can be reviewed online at: http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm

Plagiarism

The extent of plagiarism in academe is surprisingly large. Why is this surprising? Even if someone is not ethical, the penalties for plagiarism are so enormous that it would seem that people go out of their way to avoid it. For more information, see:
http://www.libs.uga.edu/researchcentral/writing/stay.html
http://www.law.uga.edu/facstaffstu/faculty/plagiarism.html

Incompletes

Incompletes will be assigned only in cases of illness, accident, or other catastrophic occurrences beyond a student's control.

Electronic Devices

As a courtesy to all, please turn off cell phones and beepers during face-to-face classes. You may use your laptops in class to take notes and search for materials relevant to the content of the course. Checking email and other off-task use of the laptops is strongly discouraged as a courtesy to me as a teacher and to yourself as a learner.

Word to the wise….start writing your literature review early.

Differences between a "Good" and a "Poor" Literature Review
(The source of these guidelines is unknown.)

- A Good Literature Review is organized around a coherent set of questions.
- A Poor Literature Review rambles from topic to topic without a clear focus.

- A Good Literature Review includes the major landmark or classic studies related to the questions guiding the study.
- A Poor Literature Review omits landmark or classic studies or mixes them with trivial studies without making distinctions about quality or relevance.

- A Good Literature Review acknowledges the author's biases as well as the limitations of the review process.
- A Poor Literature Review assumes an omniscient voice without acknowledging biases and limitations.

- A Good Literature Review critically evaluates the quality of the research according to clear criteria.
- A Poor Literature Review simply summarizes research findings without critical evaluation.

- A Good Literature Review uses quotes, illustrations, graphs, and/or tables to present and justify the critical analysis of the literature.
- A Poor Literature Review simply lists studies without presenting any critical evidence in the form of quotes, illustrations, graphs, and/or tables.

- A Good Literature Review takes the form of a logical argument that concludes with a clear rationale for additional research.
- A Poor Literature Review does not present a logical argument and fails to build a clear rationale for additional research.

- A Good Literature Review is interesting to read because it is clear, coherent, and systematic in its organization and presentation.
- A Poor Literature Review is boring or obtuse because of the overuse of jargon and pretentious language and the lack of organization.

- A Good Literature Review presents research evidence in a meaningful chronological order.
- A Poor Literature Review mixes studies from different decades without acknowledging chronological developments.

- A Good Literature Review has an accurate and up-to-date bibliography that adheres to APA Guidelines.
- A Poor Literature Review has inaccurate or missing references that are poorly formatted.

- A Good Literature Review is eminently publishable.
- A Poor Literature Review will never see the light of day in a respectable publication.