



A: Division: INSTRUCTIONAL

Date: NOVEMBER, 1997

B: Faculty: LANGUAGE, LITERATURE & PERFORMING ARTS

New Course:

Revision of Course JANUARY 1991

Information Form: X

C: PRFU 102

D: RESEARCH SKILLS FOR WRITING

E:

3

Subject and Course Number	Descriptive Title	Semester Credit					
<p>F: Calendar Description: This course provides an introduction to research and to information gathering and management in preparation for researched writing tasks. Instruction will focus on the research process, on using critical thinking skills, on sources of information such as libraries and archives, on fact-finding through interviews, on the use and abuse of statistics, on the organization of research data, and on research ethics. Studies will develop a practical perspective through fieldwork and site visits.</p>							
<p>Summary of Revisions: (date & section) 97.11 - A,B,G,H,M,N,P,R</p>							
<p>G: Type of instruction: Hrs per week</p> <p>Lecture: 1 hrs Laboratory: hrs Seminar: 2 hrs Clinical Experience: hrs Field Experience: 1 hrs Practicum: hrs Shop: hrs Studio: hrs Student Directed Learning: hrs Other (specify) hrs Total: 4 hrs</p>	<p>H: Course Prerequisites ACCEPTANCE TO PROGRAM OR PERMISSION OF COORDINATOR</p>						
	<p>I: Course Corequisites NONE</p>						
	<p>J: Course for which this Course is a Prerequisite CMNS 218</p>						
	<p>K: Maximum Class Size: 40</p>						
	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>M: Transfer Credit</td> <td>Requested</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Granted:</td> <td>x</td> </tr> </table>		M: Transfer Credit	Requested			Granted:
M: Transfer Credit	Requested						
	Granted:	x					
<p>L: College Credit Transfer x College Credit Non-Transfer Non-Credit</p>	<p>Specify Course Equivalents or Unassigned Credit as appropriate: UBC: ARTS 1st (3) SFU: U Vic: Other: SEE B.C. TRANSFER GUIDE</p>						

Hal Gray
Course Designer(s)
McCar
Faculty Dean

[Signature]
Vice-President
P. H. Dyer
Registrar

N: Textbooks and materials to be Purchased by Students

Texts could include any of the following:

Sagan, Carl. The Demon-Haunted World. Ballantine Books, 1996.

Tudor, Dean. Finding Answers: Approaches to Gathering Information in Canada. McClelland and Stewart, 1993.

Shermer, Michael. Why People Believe Weird Things. W.H. Freeman, 1997.

O. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students will be introduced to a wide variety of research resources available to them in a broad range of forms. They will develop an awareness of the information world, its formal and informal rules, and its practical application in writing assignments. Students will develop skills in information gathering and management in preparation for a career in professional writing.

P. COURSE CONTENT**1. A basic introduction to critical thinking**

The student will:

- a) Learn that information is meaningless without evaluation
- b) Understand the importance of critical thinking in information processing
- c) Learn how to improve his/her analytical skills.

2. A basic introduction to the use of information resources

The student will:

- a) Survey various kinds of libraries and information centres: public, academic, special, governmental, and private
- b) Survey the book trade and trends in worldwide publishing
- c) Examine basic reference sources: dictionaries, encyclopedias, directories, indices, internet, etc.
- d) Investigate the sources and uses of "semi-published" materials and grey literature
- e) Survey the use of bibliographic, statistical, and full-text databases
- f) Investigate the compilation and uses of market research and opinion polling.

3. A basic introduction to the use of records centres and archives

The student will:

- a) Investigate how libraries function in relation to collection management, catalogues, technical services, circulation, services to special users, etc.
- b) Investigate the functions of various library specialists, including public and academic libraries, corporate information specialists, information brokers, and database searchers.

P. COURSE CONTENT (cont'd.)

3. A basic introduction to the use of records centres and archives (cont'd)

- c) Survey various kinds of archives and records centres: public, private, corporate
- d) Survey modern methods of records and archival management: arrangement and description, respect for provenance and original order, compilation and use of finding aids
- e) Survey methods of using image and sound collections
- f) Be introduced to standard primary conservational and handling techniques for archival items.

4. Information-gathering through interviews

The student will:

- a) Examine individual prejudices of interviewers and interviewees for effective assessment of personal perspectives
- b) Analyze satisfactory preparation for successful interviewing with special attention to various forms of current documentation and facts on hand
- c) Examine the question of comprehensiveness in interviewing
- d) Analyze the credibility of various interviewees and witnesses in order to distinguish fact from fiction
- e) Analyze the editing of interview transcripts.

5. Information ethics

The student will:

- a) Review the laws of copyright as applied to written, visual, and electronically-based information through case studies and examples.

6. Time management and the research process

The student will:

- a) Analyze various research projects in terms of realistic goals, budgets, and priorities
- b) Investigate the pitfalls of faulty time management and the unrealistic scheduling of tasks
- c) Consider methods of backlog reduction
- d) Investigate time-saving communication techniques and technologies such as FAX, electronic mail, and electronic billboards.

7. Analysis of statistical data

The student will:

- a) Learn the basic terminology of statistical measurement: mean, median, mode, standard deviation, levels of significance, and significant difference
- b) Investigate effective survey design and interpretation
- c) Consider the use of experimental and control groups.

Q. METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

This course will be based on fieldwork and a series of lectures. Guest lecturers will discuss aspects of information retrieval and demonstrate hands-on database searching. Students will tour various sites, including libraries, archives, media research labs, and data centres. Assignments will focus on material derived from lectures and site visits.

R. COURSE EVALUATIONS

Critical Review of Interviewing	10%
Research Log and Critical Assessment:	
Information Retrieval	10%
Critical Formatting	20%
Critical Evaluation of Information	10%
Final Critical Assessment	20%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
	<u>100%</u>