



EFFECTIVE: SEPTEMBER 2003
CURRICULUM GUIDELINES

A. Division: Instructional Effective Date: September 2003

B. Department / Program Area: Language, Literature and Performing Arts/
 PRINT FUTURES Revision New Course

If Revision, Section(s) Revised: D, F, G, M to R
 Date of Previous Revision: November 20, 1997
 Date of Current Revision: March 3, 2003

C: PRFU 102 **D: Research Skills for Professional Writing** **E: 3**

Subject & Course No.	Descriptive Title	Semester Credits
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F: Calendar Description: This course provides an introduction to research, including the gathering and managing of information to prepare for researched writing tasks. Students will focus on the primary research process, on critical-thinking skills, on secondary 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. They will develop a practical perspective by conducting a simple primary research project and compiling a secondary research portfolio.

<p>G: Allocation of Contact Hours to Type of Instruction / Learning Settings</p> <p>Primary Methods of Instructional Delivery and/or Learning Settings: Lecture Seminar Laboratory</p> <p>Number of Contact Hours (per week / semester for each descriptor): 2 hours lecture per week 1 hour seminar per week 1 hour laboratory per week</p> <p>Number of Weeks per Semester: 15 weeks</p>	<p>H: Course Prerequisites: Acceptance into program or permission of the 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>

L: PLEASE INDICATE:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Credit		
<input type="checkbox"/>	College Credit Non-Transfer		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	College Credit Transfer:	Requested	Granted X

SEE BC TRANSFER GUIDE FOR TRANSFER DETAILS (www.bccat.bc.ca)

M: Course Objectives / Learning Outcomes

Students will be introduced to a wide variety of primary and secondary research resources available to them in a broad range of formats. They will develop a critical awareness of the information world, its formal and informal rules, and its practical application in writing assignments. They will also develop skills in gathering and managing information to prepare for researched writing tasks.

N: Course Content**1. An Introduction to Research and Critical Thinking**

Successful students will:

- a) identify the basic categories of research (e.g., primary and secondary; qualitative and quantitative) and the range of related techniques (e.g., surveying, interviewing, observing, database searching)
- b) learn that information is meaningless without critical evaluation
- c) learn how to improve their analytical skills

2. Gathering Information Through Interviews

Successful students will:

- a) understand the impact of bias and pre-judgment in interviewing
- b) know how to prepare for an information-gathering interview
- c) examine the issues of comprehensiveness and credibility in interviewing

3. Time Management and the Research Process

Successful students will:

- a) analyze reports of various research projects in terms of realistic goals, budgets, and priorities
- b) review the pitfalls of faulty time management and the unrealistic scheduling of tasks
- c) understand the role of time-saving communication techniques and technologies in conducting research
- d) review basic ethical concerns and procedures for researchers
- e) conduct a simple primary research project

4. Analysis of Statistical Data

Successful students 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 the limitations for interpretation, including how broadly results can be generalized
- c) understand the purpose of experimental and control groups
- d) understand the difference between causality and correlation

5. An Overview of Information Resources

Successful students will:

- a) learn about the information cycle (e.g., creation and distribution, storage and preservation, and retrieval of information) and its significance for writers
- b) survey various kinds of libraries and information centres: public, academic, special
- c) review how libraries function and the role of information specialists
- d) survey various kinds of archival institutions
- e) examine basic categories of reference materials
- f) survey trends for print and electronic publications
- g) review the impact of technological change on the creation and distribution of information

6. Issues in the Use of Information Resources

Successful students will:

- a) learn how to develop appropriate search strategies
- b) survey the use of bibliographic, statistical, full-text databases, and Web sites
- c) learn how to judge the quality of information (e.g., currency, authority, reliability, suitability)
- d) examine examples that clarify ethical problems (e.g., misinformation, fraud, plagiarism)
- e) prepare a secondary research portfolio (i.e., construct a research portfolio in preparation for a written task using a variety of information resources)

O: Methods of Instruction

This course will be based on lectures, seminars, and laboratory work. Students may be required to collaborate on specified assignments.

P: Textbooks and Materials to be Purchased by Students

A list of recommended textbooks and/or materials will be provided on the instructor's course outline, available to students at the beginning of each semester. Typically, this course requires reading of materials on reserve and/or available free on the Web.

Q: Means of Assessment

Students are expected to be self-motivated and to demonstrate professionalism, which includes active participation, good attendance, punctuality, effective collaboration, ability to meet deadlines, presentation skills, and accurate self-evaluation.

Evaluation will be based on this general format:

Critical review	15%
Primary research project (interview- and/or survey-based)	25%
Secondary research project (integrated portfolio including proposal, print, on-line materials)	40%
Lab exercises	10%
Professionalism	10%
	100%

R: Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition: specify whether course is open for PLAR

Yes.

Course Designer(s)

Education Council / Curriculum Committee Representative

Dean / Director

Registrar