

L A K E H E A D U N I V E R S I T Y

FACULTY OF INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES (ORILLIA)

Dr. Paul R. Carr

Inquiry 4030 WAO

(T/Th, 2:30-4:00pm) Fall 2011

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(NOTE: All communication for this course will take place within the WebCT portal)
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[NOTE: THE FOURTH-YEAR INQUIRY COURSE IS A KEY ELEMENT TO THE INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES DEGREE AND EXPERIENCE. ALTHOUGH THERE MAY BE SOME VARIANCE IN THE APPROACH TAKEN TO TEACH THIS COURSE IN THE VARIOUS SECTIONS, THE INSTRUCTORS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO COORDINATE THE CONTENT, OUTCOMES AND EVALUATIONS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE A COMMON, BROAD AND INTERDISCIPLINARY FOCUS FOR ALL STUDENTS, REGARDLESS OF THEIR SECTION. FOR 2011-2012 THE INSTRUCTORS FOR THE FOURTH-YEAR INQUIRY COURSES (4010 & 4030) ARE PAUL R. CARR, ROSARIO TURVEY, DOUG WEST AND MICHAEL STEVENSON.]

1. Course Description

The fourth-year Inquiry courses are designed to be culminating experiences in the Honours Arts and Science program. Adding to what you have learned in first year Inquiry course as well as in many other courses during the last few years, these courses seek to refine your questioning, critical thinking, and research abilities, enabling you to apply them to areas of your own academic interest.

The first course fourth-year course--INQUIRY 4010--will focus on strategies for discovering effective research questions, research ethics, theoretical approaches to research, methods for exploring various textual, qualitative and quantitative methods, and critical thinking skills for analyzing and evaluating results.

Through individual assignments, class discussion, and group projects, various fluencies and aptitudes will be advanced, including scientific fluency, critical literacy, critical numeracy, and cultural awareness.

In Inquiry 4010, students will develop research strategies, and work towards a research proposal. The research proposal will be finalized in the Winter term (in Inquiry 4030), which will set students on a trajectory leading to a completed research project.

2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course students will be able to:

- Demonstrate advanced conceptual and practical understanding of their research topic diverse perspectives and disciplines;
- Articulate general and specific levels of knowledge;
- Identify viable research issues, and ask relevant questions;
- Critically synthesize, and be able to evaluate existing research;
- Explain, and elaborate on, at diverse methodologies;
- Organize data, and develop findings;
- Compose oral and written ideas persuasively, with specific support for claims and clear effective prose;
- [For the 4030 Inquiry course students will implement their research proposals, undertaking research, analyzing the results, and presenting their projects in a coherent, critical and relevant paper/report.]
- THE FINAL PRODUCT FOR THIS COURSE WILL BE AN INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECT, WHICH WILL INCLUDE A WRITTEN DOCUMENT AND AN ORAL PRESENTATION. AS PART OF THIS PROCESS, STUDENTS WILL DEVELOP A “CONFERENCE-STYLE” POSTER.

3. Texts

Strand, Kerry J. & Weiss, Gregory L. (2005). *Experiencing social research: A reader*. Boston: Pearson Education.
ISBN: 0-205-40448-8

Neuman, Lawrence W. & Robson, K. (2012). *Basics of social research: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Toronto: Pearson Education.
ISBN: 978-0-205-76740-3

[NOTE: THESE TWO TEXTS, WHICH WERE USED IN 4010, WILL BE IMPORTANT RESOURCES FOR 4030, AND WILL BE HELPFUL IN DEVELOPING RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES AND UNDERTAKING RESEARCH. IT SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT THE NEUMAN & ROBSON TEXT HAS BEEN SPECIFICALLY WRITTEN FOR A CANADIAN AUDIENCE.]

4. Evaluation

A – Discussant response	20%
B – Oral presentation on Individual Research Project	25%
D – Final Individual Research Project (written report)	55%
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(NOTE: All written assignments are to be submitted through WebCT EXCEPT the Poster)

[NOTE: FOR THE WINTER SEMESTER IN 4030, STUDENTS WILL: REVIEW THEIR DRAFT PROPOSALS WILL BE REVIEWED WITH THEIR PROFESSORS; ENHANCE THE LITERATURE REVIEWS; SUBMIT AN ETHICS APPROVAL FORM; COMPLETE THE REFINING OF AN APPROPRIATE METHODOLOGY; DRAFT APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS, QUERIES, METHODS OF OBSERVATION/PARTICIPATION AND/OR OTHER METHODS; UNDERTAKE THE RESEARCH, FOLLOWED BY ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS.]

5. Assignments

A – Discussant response	20%
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As at many academic conferences, one person is assigned to read the paper in advance and give a formal response. Since our conference papers are still works-in-progress, the discussant will be asked to read your project proposal (which you will provide at least one week before your presentation) and respond not only to what is written but also to the modifications mentioned during the presentation. The response should answer the following questions:

- i) What do we learn from the presented research?
- ii) What is particularly relevant?
- iii) What are some of the conceptual, theoretical and empirical issues of note?
- iv) Does the methodology appropriately connect to the findings?
- v) Are there any suggestions for improvement?
- vi) Are there particular approaches, perspectives and analyses that are innovative and insightful?
- vii) Other comments, as appropriate.

Please keep in mind that the objective is to support colleague while enhancing critical thinking, research and conceptual skills.

A schedule will be designed for the month of March to undertake presentations.

B – Oral presentation on Individual Research Project	25%
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In March, students will give an oral presentation on their research, followed by a critique by a discussant, and a class-discussion. The feedback provided will allow students to further refine their analysis in order to enhance their posters and final papers. The presentations will be roughly 20 minutes, and should serve as an

opportunity to explore how people respond to the research: does it make sense, does it cover an appropriate topic in an appropriate way, how could it be improved, does the analysis develop clear themes, etc.?

D – Final Individual Research Project (written report)

55%

Take the brief research proposal submitted in December, and polish and extend it, using comments provided to you by your instructor. You will continue to augment your literature review, and will also submit the completed proposal through the Ethics Review process.

Your statement of conceptual framework should address (all or most) of the following

- a) The role of theory in your study (consider using a diagram here)
- b) The perspective or paradigm behind the research
- c) The personal subjective relationship you have to your object of study and how this relationship influences the conduct and conceptualization of your research
- d) Whether or not your research is descriptive or explanatory or both
- e) If explanatory, is the focus on generalization or verification of theory? If focus is on theory verification, what are the hypotheses and what is the theory behind them?
- f) To what extent (and in what parts) is my study pre-structured or unfolding?

Your statement of methodology should address (all or most) of the following

- a) Will my study use quantitative methods (and data), qualitative methods (and data), mixed methods or “multi-strategy research”, or some kind of discourse / archival analysis?
- b) Who and what will be studied?
- c) Issues of sampling: From whom will data be collected? What is the sample plan? How big will the sample be and so on?
- d) Issues of data collection: Instruments to be used or developed? What is the data collection plan and intended procedure? Justify why you have made a particular plan and/or chosen a particular procedure.
- e) How you intend to analyze the data you collect.

Your statement of ethical issues should consider (all or many) of the following

- a) Informed consent
- b) Confidentiality and anonymity
- c) Ownership of data and conclusion
- d) Use and misuse of results
- e) The relationship you have to the people involved in your study. Do they have your trust? What measures will you take to build this trust? Will you harm anyone intentionally or unintentionally? What will you do if you see harmful, illegal or wrongful behaviour during your research?
- f) What do participants have to gain from your research?

- g) What are the power relationships between yourself and your research subjects? And how will you handle these?

Your Final Research Proposal should be written mainly in whole sentence/paragraph form. Depending on the type of research you are planning to do, you may choose your own headings and subtitles. Whatever format you choose for this assignment, your research proposal should contain the following elements, roughly in order that they appear:

- a) Title and title page
- b) Abstract (150 words max.)
- c) Introduction, including a brief statement of research area, topic and purpose (200 words max.)
- d) Research questions, general (or central) and specific
- e) Conceptual framework (see details above) (250 words max.)
- f) Literature review of those works that are related directly to your proposed research either empirically, methodologically or theoretically; include a statement of the significance of your study in terms of the pre-existing literature on your chosen topic (1500 words max.)
- g) Methods (see details above) (750 words max., not including data collection questions)
- h) Limitations and delimitations (500 word max.)
- i) Ethical issues (see details above) (200 word max.)
- j) Findings (1500 word max.)
- k) Discussion (1000 word max.; what is the relevance of this study, how does it connect with the literature, what are the implications, what could be the next steps, etc.?)
- l) Conclusion
- m) References
- n) Appendices (such as interview schedules, questionnaires)

FORMAT: 12-point font, double-spaced pages, Times Roman

DUE: First week of April

6. Course Policies

1. It is your responsibility to attend classes and workshops. Regular absences will seriously affect your grades in this course. (Please do not request notes for missed classes from your instructor. But do contact her if you are experiencing medical or other difficulties.)
2. Assignments should be submitted in paper format (no online or fax) at the beginning of class on the due date. Extensions/deferrals will only be granted in documented cases of serious illness or under extenuating circumstances and only if arranged **before** the due date. Please note that excessive workload does **not** constitute an extenuating circumstance. Deferrals will not be granted on the basis of vacation/travel plans or job-

related obligations. Late assignments will be penalized 2% per day including weekends. After 10 days, no late assignments will be accepted.

3. Submissions for grades must represent independent work. Highly similar (or identical) assignments will be graded at zero. An assignment may not be submitted for credit in more than one course without the written permission of all instructors involved.
4. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offense and carries penalties varying from failure in an assignment to expulsion from the university. Students are encouraged to review Section IX of the University Regulations regarding academic dishonesty. All offenders will be reported to the Dean.

All borrowed sources (for words as well as ideas) must be acknowledged using either the MLA (Modern Language Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) style formats. (For consistency, use one format, not both.) Assistance with both formats may be found online at <http://library.lakeheadu.ca/wp/?pg=376>

7. Course Schedule

WEEK	CONTENT*	ACTIVITIES
1	Review of research process, and approach for 4030	
2	Overview of ethics review process, and roundtable discussion of methodology	
3	Individual meetings with students to discuss their individual research projects	Ethics Review form due
4	Individual meetings with students to discuss their individual research projects	Final proposal to be submitted
5	Independent research	
6	Individual meetings with students to discuss their individual research projects	
7	Independent research	
8	Presentations	→ Oral presentation + discussant report
9	Presentations	→ Oral presentation + discussant report
10	Presentations	→ Oral presentation + discussant report
11	Individual meetings with students to discuss their individual research projects	
12	Review and discussion	→ Assignment D (Final paper) due

*Readings will be assigned during the first week of class

8. Academic Guidelines

- a. A fundamental principle for the teaching and learning in this course is the free and open exchange of ideas in a climate of mutual respect, reinforcing an academic environment in which we can expand our horizons at the individual and collective levels.
- b. There is a penalty for assignments handed in late unless appropriate arrangements and/or documentation (i.e., medical notes) are provided.
- c. Written assignments must be formatted according to a recognized referencing and citations style guide.
- d. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be dealt with according to the University regulations. For more information, see University Regulations section “IX Academic Dishonesty,” Lakehead University Calendar 10/11:
<http://calendar.lakeheadu.ca/current/contents/regulations/univregsIXacdishon.html>
- e. Diversity and equity are concepts of central importance within an academic context, and we should be cognizant of the experiences, approaches and presence of our colleagues. Everyone should be made to feel comfortable in our classroom.
- f. Attendance in class, preparation to discuss readings and assignments, submitting work on time, and following the structure and rhythm of the class are the responsibility of students.
- g. The readings for this course are extremely important, and will assist students greatly as they undertake the required assignments and prepare for the final exam.
- h. Being able to write clearly, in good English, in a structure and style that is both effective and easy to follow, is important for this course. Students are encouraged to re-read and re-work their assignments before submitting them. The Instructor’s website contains a summary of points that will assist in writing an effective paper. There are University resources available for those in need of assistance with writing.
- i. In accordance with University procedures, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. You must be registered with the appropriate University service.
- j. The instructor will be available at designated times, before and after class, and through the WebCT portal. Arrangements will be made for telephone contact. This syllabus is purposely detailed so as to provide a clear guide to where we are headed, what is expected, and how assignments will be evaluated.
- k. In order to facilitate a respectful, constructive and conducive learning environment, students are asked to turn off all electronic devices during class time.