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EVST 201.01: Invironmental Information Resources

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ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION RESOURCES

EVST 201_01
Fall, 2008, Forestry 301
TR 9:40—11:00 am
CRN: 74633

Dan Spencer: JRH 103, x6111; daniel.spencer@umontana.edu
DS Office Hours: MW 3-5 pm, Tu 4-5 pm, or by appointment
Barry Brown, Mansfield Lib. 327, x6811; barry.brown@umontana.edu
BB Office Hours: Fri 2-3 pm or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

The primary purpose of EVST 201 is to give the student skills for finding, evaluating, and using existing information to increase understanding of environmental issues and resolve controversies. During the semester, each student will **research** a subject of her or his choosing, using a variety of sources (including, but not limited to refereed literature, government sources, internet sources, and interviews); **evaluate** sources critically; **synthesize information**; **write** a literature review on the topic, and give a **formal presentation**. A central focus of the course is on using **critical thinking** to analyze a topic and deal effectively with the information explosion.

REQUIRED TEXTS

M. Neil Browne & Stuart M. Keeley. Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2007); 8th ed.

Jose L. Galvan. Writing Literature Reviews: A guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences (Glendale, CA: Pyrczak Publishing, 2006); 3rd ed.

ASSIGNMENTS AND CLASSES

Class Day Session Topic

Assigned Readings

8/26 TU 1 Spencer: Introduction: Laying out themes and structure of the course Library Tour at 10:35 am

8/28 TH 2 Spencer: Planning Literature Research

CT 1-4; LR 1-2

<u>Due</u>: Student Introductions on Blackboard

9/2 TU 3 Spencer: Critical Thinking: Values, Assumptions, and CT 5-7; LR 3 Fallacies in Reasoning Lomborg: http://grist.org/advice/books/2001/12/12/of/

Due: Proposal 1

9/4 TH 4 Literature Reviews: Purpose and Structure ERES: Belsky et al

Due: Journal Report

9/9	TU 5	Brown: Comprehensive Search Statements and Electronic Indexes Note: All Brown classes will be held in Mansfield Library 283	CT 8-9
		<u>Due</u> : Belsky outline	
9/11	TH 6	Brown: Comprehensive Search Statements and Electronic Indexes, cont	LR 4
9/16	TU 7	Spencer: Considering the Evidence: Critically Evaluating the Primary Research Paper ERES: Fischer & Lind	enmayeı
		Email to Brown: LSA I	
9/18	TH 8	Spencer: Preparing Critical Reviews ERES: Schmetterling &	McEvoy
		<u>Due</u> : Proposal 2	
9/23	TU 9	Brown: Comprehensive Search Statements and Electronic Indexes, cont. (ML 238)	LR 5-6
		<u>Due</u> : Critical Review of Schmetterling & McEvoy	
9/25	TH 10	Brown: Comprehensive Search Statements and Electronic Indexes, cont. C (ML 238)	CT 10-12
9/30	TU 11	Spencer: Rival Causes, Statistics, and Multiple Conclusions	CT 13-14
		Email to Brown: LSA II	
10/2	TH 12	Spencer: Identifying Experts and Conducting Interviews; ERES: McIver Mid-Semester Course Evaluation	r & Starı
10/7	TU 13	Brown: Library Catalogs and Current Awareness (ML 238)	
		<u>Due</u> : Final Proposal	
10/9	TH 14	Brown: Library Catalogs and Current Awareness, cont. (ML 238)	LR 8
10/1	4 TU 15	5 Brown: Web Information and Search Engines (ML 238)	
		Email to Brown: LSA III	
10/1	6 TH 10	6 Brown: Web Information and Search Engines, cont. (ML 238)	LR 9
10/2	1 TU 17	7 Spencer: Creating the Annotated Bibliography	LR 10
		Email to Brown: LSA IV	
10/2	3 TH 18	8 Spencer: Crafting the Outline and Introduction	LR 11

10/28 TU 19 Spencer: Presenting Outlines LR 12-13

Due: Outline

10/30 TH 20 Spencer: Presenting Outlines

11/4 TU Election Day - No Class (Vote!)

11/6 TH 21 Spencer: Giving Effective Presentations; Appropriate Citation Styles

Due: Annotated Bibliography

11/11 TU Veterans' (Armistice) Day

11/13 TH 22 Student Presentations

Due: Abstract

11/18 TU 23 Student Presentations

11/20 TH 24 Student Presentations

11/25 TU 25 Student Presentations

Due: Final Papers for Peer Review

11/27 TH No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday

12/2 TU 26 Student Presentations

Due: Peer Reviews (2 copies

12/4 TH 27 Student Presentations

<u>Due</u>: Revised Final Papers (1 paper copy & 1 email copy)

FINAL EXAM PERIOD: Student Presentations Wednesday, December 10, 10:10-12:10

GRADING POLICY

Note Re Papers: Papers are due in class **on or before** the date listed in the syllabus. Unless you have made a prior agreement with me, I will take off one grade level (A becomes A-) for each class day an assignment is late. Papers with an undue number of errors of punctuation, spelling, or grammar will be marked down and may be returned ungraded for correction. Written work will be evaluated in terms of your depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, clarity of writing, and ability to address issues raised in the text and in class on the topic at hand. Grades given reflect the following criteria of judgment:

- F: Failure to meet minimum requirements
- D: Unsatisfactory, but some effort to meet minimum requirements
- C: Satisfactory; meets minimum requirements of assignment but not much more
- B: Good to Very Good: thoughtful reflection, good analysis, clear writing style
- A: Excellent depth of critical analysis, thoughtfulness of reflection, and writing style; demonstrate creativity and mature analytical skills in going beyond the primary requirements of the assignment

Attendance: Regular attendance and participation in the class is expected. More than **three** (3) absences will result in losing any benefit of the doubt on your final grade. More than **five** (5) absences will result in one grade reduction. More than **seven** (7) absences will result in a failing course grade. Late arrivals in class will count as an absence. (**Note**: If you have a valid reason for missing several classes, such as illness or other conflicting commitments, you still **must** speak with the instructor).

Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism: All work submitted is expected to be the student's own. Any acts of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in **automatic failure of the course**, and may result in **further academic punishment**. If you have any doubts about definitions of plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please review the relevant sections of the University Catalog and speak to the course instructor **before** you turn in work.

BLACKBOARD

We'll be using the web-based program, Blackboard, for class assignments, messages, and readings. You can log in to Blackboard at http://courseware.umt.edu/ (I suggest you make a bookmark of this site) using your Net/ID Username and Password. You should check Blackboard the night before each class for any messages and assignment information.

WEIGHT AND TIMELINE OF ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. Brown's assignments (LSA I to IV) are to be emailed to him by **9:00 am** on the due date. Spencer's assignments (all others) are due as **hard copies** at the <u>beginning</u> of class on the due date. Late work loses a percentage of the grade for each class day it is late. All assignments must have individual authors.
- 2. The weight of each assignment is reflected in the amount of points assigned to each:

10 points each for journal report, outline of Belsky, abstract	30 points total
20 points each for final proposal and paper outline	40
30 points each for critical review of Schmetterling, & McEvoy,	
annotated bibliography, peer review	90
40 points each for Brown's LSA assignments	160
100 points for your final literature review paper	100
80 points for your oral presentation	80

Grade \equiv % of 500 points earned 500

Note: final grades will use pluses and minuses. No extra credit is available, so do your best work on the assignments you turn in.

DESCRIPTION OF ASSIGNMENTS

Each assignment will be described in class and can be found in full on Blackboard.

Important University Policies, Dates and Deadlines

For Important Dates and University policies, check Cyberbear at http://cyberbear.umt.edu/

<u>Credit/No Credit Grade option</u>: A minimum grade average of D- (60) is required for a CR grade in the CR/NC Grade option.

<u>Incomplete Grade</u>: Please see the criteria that must be met for an Incomplete on p. 23 of the University Catalog. No exceptions will be made for these criteria.

ERES: To access the ERES readings: (Note: All ERES readings are also found on Blackboard)

- a. Go into http://eres.lib.umt.edu/
- b. Click on Electronic Reserves and Course Materials
- c. Under Instructor, find and select SPENCER, Daniel
- d. Click on the course name (EVST 201).
- e. Enter the password, "EVST201"