

EVDS 683.77 H(3-0)
Advanced Special Topics in Environmental Design
(Research Seminar II)

Winter 2015

Instructor
Instructor Contact Information
Office location and office hours

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EVDS 683 - M 09:30 - 12:20 PF 2140
05 (16457)

Introduction

Thematic inquiry and design related to urban design, architecture, environmental science, industrial design and planning. This course may be repeated for credit.

An increasing trend in thesis-based graduate programs is the inclusion of research seminars that foster a strong research culture and provide a foundation for the development of a high quality thesis. The research seminar provides a forum for discussion and evaluation of independent research, hands-on learning, and assists the students in the development of their ideas in a more efficient manner.

The course is specifically designed to lead to a successful completion of a strong thesis in one of the fields in the Faculty of Environmental Design.

Objectives

The research seminar is demand-driven and responds to the specific needs of students in terms of content and pedagogy.

It has the following objectives:

1. To facilitate the development of a high quality thesis through well-directed independent research;
2. To provide an effective feedback on thesis-based research through a forum for discussion and peer evaluation;
3. To foster a strong research culture with peer support and interaction;
4. To contribute to the development of essential research skills;
5. To familiarize participants with online resources to support conducting, organizing and disseminating research as well as managing academic reputation.

Teaching Approach

The research seminar acknowledges the value of peer-reviewed research contributions in shaping and advancing the knowledge in the interdisciplinary field of environmental design. Students, depending on their thesis topic, select research publications from international journals, books, conference proceedings, Master and PhD theses communicating recent advances in their specific fields. A review of the literature will be presented to the class and discussed to facilitate proactive learning. The class will select research areas most relevant to the students, which will be explored through lectures, student presentations and/or critical review of theses. Students can also present, discuss and address with the class a methodological line-of-attack for their own thesis.

The course requires participants to attend class and/or to contribute to critical discussion of student research papers/chapters of their thesis. Students also conduct individual literature review, under direction from the instructor. Class meets weekly, at which time a student will present chapters of their thesis, a conference paper related to their thesis research or the results of a literature review pertaining to recent theories in their selected field of inquiry. Students are also encouraged to present, discuss and address with the class a methodological problem of interest, focusing on the logistics aspects. The latter format allows student to share with the class their thesis' ideas and receive constructive feedback. The presentation will be followed by a group discussion in which all in attendance are expected to participate. The aim is always to prompt discussion and feedback, with the instructor and the presenting student serving as the moderators.

In addition to the scheduled seminar sessions, the instructor will be available for individual consultations with students to assist them with development of research papers (see 'Means of Evaluation' below) and seminar presentations for the course. In addition, the students are allowed to consult with the instructor while choosing 2-3 scholarly readings to share with the class (see below).

Content: Topic Areas & Detailed Class Schedule

CLASS LOGISTICS

A typical class will have four elements:

- a) **A prepared presentation by a student on their research proposal, research questions, research results, or a significant journal or conference paper related to the student's work.**

Length: 30 minutes of presentation, followed by approximately 30 minutes of discussion directly related to presentation material with the attendees.

- b) **A presentation by the instructor of a research skill and Introduction of a research-related skill by the instructor.**
- c) **Practical work, alone or in small groups, to practice and enhance the skill introduced.**
- d) **Reporting back to the class on findings, what was learned, and suggestions.**

Elements to be included in the presentation:

- A descriptive title, the author's name, address, and email address.
- Background Section: This should briefly summarize the background literature review a student has done.
- A synthesis that describes the approach a student wants to take, the take that she/he wants to give to the topic and/or the hypotheses that she/he wants to test.
- In general, a student wants to set the stage for an interesting intellectual contribution. She/he also wants to describe the broad implications of a topic to environmental design matters.

No later than 3 days after each presentation, the presenter will post a pdf of the presentation in the class dropbox. All students are expected to send feedback on the presentation and 'tips' to strengthen the research approach.

The pdf of the most developed presentation done in the course will also serve as 'basic structure' for a research paper to be handed in to the instructor. Alternatively, the student may submit a thesis chapter that clearly demonstrates incorporation of the inputs received from the instructor and the other students.

Schedule: Unless otherwise announced, this class will meet every Monday from January 12, 2015 to April 13, 2015 except for February 16, 2015 (Family Day Holiday). There will be no final examination.

Means of Evaluation

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| 1. Individual presentations | 25% |
| 2. Individual participation (quantity and quality) in group discussions | 20% |
| 3. Quality of material shared with the group (including, but not limited to Journal publications and copy of student presentations) | 25% |
| 4. Research paper/thesis chapter | 30% |

Grading Scale

Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to the 4-point range. Percentage grades will not be used in this course.

Grade	Grade Point Value	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	95-100	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	90-94.99	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	85-89.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	80-84.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	75-79.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-74.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	65-69.99	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	60-64.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	55-59.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	50-54.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	45-49.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-44.99	

Notes:

- A student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript.

Readings

There is no required textbook for this course. A list of online readings and web pages will be provided through the University of Calgary Design2Learn (D2L) system. Students are expected to log on to D2L at least once a week to keep abreast of course announcements and other documents.

Special Budgetary Requirements – please include these in the course outline.

There are no special budgetary requirements for this course.

Notes:

1. Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor. Submissions must come from an official University of Calgary (ucalgary) email account.
2. It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Student Accessibility Services, please contact their office at 220-8237. (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/access>) Students who have not registered with the Student Accessibility Services are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.
3. Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course(although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.
4. Information regarding the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>) and how this impacts the receipt and delivery of course material
5. Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
6. Safewalk information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>)
7. Contact Info for: Student Union (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/affordability-accessibility/contact>); Graduate Student representative(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa/>) and Student Ombudsman's Office (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/quality-education/academic-services/student-rights>).