

GLIS 611

RESEARCH PRINCIPLES AND ANALYSIS

Winter 2021

Time: Thursdays 8:30-11:30 – but we will meet 9:00-10:30

Classroom: Zoom / myCourses

Zoom link: <https://mcgill.zoom.us/j/88376011683>

INSTRUCTOR

Prof. Rebekah (Becky) Willson (MLIS, PhD)

rebekah.willson@mcgill.ca

Office hours: Thursdays 10:30-11:30

Please make an appointment using <https://calendly.com/rebekah-willson> or email me to set up an appointment outside office hours. Once confirmed, I will send you a Zoom link for the meeting.

DESCRIPTION

Fundamental aspects of reflective thinking and the methods and techniques of research appropriate to the investigation of information problems. Criteria helpful in evaluating published research in information science by analyzing the various steps of the research process, thereby providing guidelines for planning, conducting, and reporting research.

CONTENT

- Foundations of research: theories, observation, assumptions, limitations, and ethics
- Research principles in quantitative and qualitative research: research questions, research problems, and rigour
- Steps in the basic research process: topic selection, question negotiation, study design, data collection and analysis
- Communicating research: the research proposal, research report, and publication process

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course you will be able to:

- Think critically about research in information science
- Identify the stages of the research process
- Evaluate and synthesize published research
- Conduct basic planning, conducting, and reporting of research
- Understand and perform basic quantitative and qualitative analyses

At the end of this course, students will be able to put on their CVs that they have hands-on experience planning and carrying out a small research project using questionnaires and interviews, including data collection, analysis, and writing-up findings.

REMOTE DELIVERY AND INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

The pandemic has changed the ways universities work, meaning that GLIS 611 will be taught remotely. The content for the course has not changed but how the course is delivered has. Of course, students may have questions and concerns about how classes will proceed in these extraordinary times but there will be plenty of opportunities to discuss the course, ask questions, provide feedback about how the course is supporting your learning, and to make changes to ensure that all students are able to learn effectively.

The majority of the course content will be provided online to do at your own pace (e.g., short video lectures, activities) and will be posted well in advance of the Thursdays. On Thursdays, there will be an optional real-time Zoom session (lasting approximately an hour and a half) for asking questions, small and large group discussions, activities, etc. Students are expected to have completed all readings, viewings and activities before the Zoom session. The real-time Zoom sessions are strongly encouraged for those who can make it.

For those students who cannot make the real-time sessions, there will be other equivalent options made available (e.g., participating in discussion boards activities and discussions) and session recordings will be posted. All materials for the course will be made available on myCourses.

SESSION RECORDINGS

Real-time sessions when there are full-class discussions and guest lecturers will be recorded and posted. Students will be made aware of when recordings are being made. Students who wish to ask questions or make comments but not be recorded will be given an opportunity to do so. Small group discussions and groupwork will not be recorded.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

The course is based on active contribution and participation of students. Students are expected to contribute to their groups and participate in the class discussions, whether synchronously (in real time) or asynchronously (not occurring at the same time).

READINGS

Mandatory text:

There are no mandatory textbooks. Content will be assigned each week that are freely available to students. Please see the Class Schedule for the readings and viewings.

Recommended texts:

Connaway, L. S., & Powell, R.R. (2010). *Basic Research Methods for Librarians* (5th ed.). Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited. <https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/699490360> (ebook available through McGill Libraries)

Walliman, N. (2011). *Research methods: The basics*. London: Routledge.
<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/701718525> (ebook available through McGill Libraries)

Please note that most resources shared or shown in class, including lecture slides, will be made available on myCourses.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is based on the planning, creation, and implementation of a research project. Work will be done in groups and individually. The research project will be done in a step-by-step manner that allows for feedback and revision. The research project planning and implementation will be done in groups; the final report will be done individually.

Assignment	Value
Complete TCPS2 ethics training	
Research topic	
Literature review	10%
Research problem and research questions	10%
Questionnaire and interview guide	20%
Ethics approval	
Data Collection – questionnaires	
Data Collection and transcription – interview	
Data analysis	25%
Peer evaluation	5%
Final research report (individual)	30%

LATE POLICY

For all assignments, 5% will be deducted for each 24-hour period the assignment is late after the due date.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

The course is based on **active** contribution and participation of students; there is a substantial practical component to this course. The Zoom session will be divided between lectures, discussion, and activities. Because of the way the class is structured, it is important to read/watch materials before class, attend the Zoom session/post on the discussion board regularly, and contribute to group work and discussions.

CLASS CONDUCT AND MCGILL POLICY STATEMENTS

Email

When emailing the instructor, **please include the course code (GLIS 611) in the subject line.** I will get back to you within 24 hours Monday to Friday. If, in the unlikely case you have not heard back from within this timeframe, please email again.

In line with McGill's Policy on E-Mail Communication with Students, any official McGill email sent to students will be addressed to their McGill UEA (Uniform E-Mail Address). It is the student's responsibility to ensure that time-critical e-mail is accessed, read and acted upon in a timely fashion. The E-Mail Policy applies to all McGill students and to all McGill employees, who manage official communications with students.

Class Conduct

This class follows McGill University policies, procedures and guidelines (<http://www.mcgill.ca/secretariat/policies/students/>). Class participation is a valued aspect of this course. Discussions on class-related materials and business, whether they take place in the classroom or online via the discussion board on myCourses, should be conducted in a **respectful manner**, reflective of the School and the University policies, procedures and guidelines.

- Be considerate of your classmates by arriving to class sessions and group meetings *on time*.
- Be an active and respectful participant in discussions.
- Be prepared for class by completing the assignments and readings.

Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [McGill's guide to academic honesty](#) for more information).

Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions, etc.) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that infringements of copyright can be subject to follow up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures. No audio or video recording is allowed in class without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For assignments, reports, presentations, or whenever the words or ideas of others are used, *sources must be properly quoted and cited*.

Language of Submission

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Assessment

The [University Student Assessment Policy](#) exists to ensure fair and equitable academic assessment for all students and to protect students from excessive workloads. All students and instructors are encouraged to review this Policy, which addresses multiple aspects and methods of student assessment, e.g. the timing of evaluation due dates and weighting of final examinations.

Students with Disabilities

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#), 514-398-6009.

*For students who are registered with OSD, please see me if you require accommodations. The earlier you can do this, the better.

Extraordinary Circumstances

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

Students are encouraged to review student supports and services offered by the Office of the Dean of Students (including Student Rights and Responsibilities)

<https://www.mcgill.ca/deanofstudents/students>.

Prof. Rebekah (Becky) Willson (MLIS, PhD)

Assistant Professor
School of Information Studies
McGill University
Winter 2021

McGill University is situated on the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehà:ka, a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. We recognize and respect the Kanien'kehà:ka as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet.