



# Oregon State University

## Ecampus

**Course Name:** Applying an Interdisciplinary Perspective  
**Course Number:** IST 512  
**Instructor name:** David Bernell  
**Instructor email:** david.bernell@oregonstate.edu  
**Instructor phone:** 541-737-6281

### Course Description

Students will develop knowledge and skills in theory, research methods, and practice of approaching problems, issues, or events from an interdisciplinary perspective.

### Communication

Please post all course-related questions in the Q&A Discussion Forum so that the whole class may benefit from our conversation. Please contact me directly for matters pertaining only to you. Please use my regular email address, [david.bernell@oregonstate.edu](mailto:david.bernell@oregonstate.edu). Do not use the email system provided by the course site on Canvas.

### Technical Assistance

If you experience any errors or problems while in your online course, contact 24-7 Canvas Support through the Help link within Canvas. If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading a browser or plug-in, or need assistance logging into a course, contact the IS Service Desk for assistance. You can call (541) 737-8787 or visit the IS Service Desk online.

### Course Credits

This course combines approximately 90 hours of instruction, online activities, and assignments for 3 credits.

### Learning Resources

Allen Repko & Rick Szostak, *Interdisciplinary Research: Process and Theory*, 2016 (on OSU Library Course Reserve).  
Allen Repko & William Newell, *Case Studies in Interdisciplinary Research*, 2012 (on OSU Library Course Reserve).  
All other course materials (readings, links, etc.) will be available on the course Canvas site.

### Measurable Student Learning Outcomes

1. Understand the process of conducting interdisciplinary research.
2. Explain the components of an interdisciplinary thesis and interdisciplinary project.
3. Synthesize literature from three fields of study into a thesis/project proposal.
4. Comprehend and apply high ethical standards in research and writing.

### Evaluation of Student Performance

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| • Writing Assignments (5 at 100 points each)     | 30% |
| • Annotated Bibliographies (8 at 10 points each) | 15% |
| • IRB Certification (100 points)                 | 10% |
| • Thesis Review (100 points)                     | 15% |
| • Thesis/Project Proposal (100 points)           | 30% |

## Letter Grades

Grade	Percent Range
A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	Below 60

## Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
1	Introduction: Interdisciplinarity in Practice (I)	Marilyn Tayler, "Jewish Marriage..." and Ria van der Lecq, "Why We Talk," both in Repko and Newell, <i>Case Studies</i> . (Chapters 2 and 7)	Writing Assignment 1
2	Working with Three Disciplines	Repko and Szostak, <i>Interdisciplinary Research</i> , Chapter 4.	Writing Assignment 2
3	What Is the Thesis and the Project?	MAIS Materials: Thesis or Project	Writing Assignment 3
4	Researching Resources and The Literature Review (I)	Repko and Szostak, <i>Interdisciplinary Research</i> , Chapter 5. Materials from UNC, VCU, and UMN.	Annotated Bibliographies
5	Researching Resources and The Literature Review (II)	Repko and Szostak, <i>Interdisciplinary Research</i> , Chapter 6.	Annotated Bibliographies
6	Ethical Practice and the IRB	CITI Training Module	CITI Certification
7	Interdisciplinarity in Practice (II)	OSU MAIS Thesis (of your choosing)	Thesis Review
8	Integrating Fields of Study (I)	Repko and Szostak, <i>Interdisciplinary Research</i> , Chapters 7 & 9.	Writing Assignment 4
9	Integrating Fields of Study (II)	Repko and Szostak, <i>Interdisciplinary Research</i> , Chapters 10 & 11.	Writing Assignment 5
10	Your Proposal	None	Thesis/Project Proposal

## Writing Assignments

Writing Assignment 1: Provide a response to Tayler, "Jewish Marriage..." and van der Lecq, "Why We Talk."

- What does the interdisciplinary research process entail?
- What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the process used in the article?
- Which parts of the process seem most and least challenging to you? Why?
- How do expect you can carry out this process in your own research? What will you need to do in order to be successful in this effort?

This course is offered through Oregon State University Extended Campus. For more information visit: <http://ecampus.oregonstate.edu>.

Writing Assignment 2: Develop a “map” of two of your fields of study in the way that Repko and Szostak do in Chapter 4. Develop a table/grid/map that provides the following:

- Explain the discipline’s perspective, phenomena, epistemologies, methods, and major theories that relate to a topic that you’ll be researching.
- Do not simply use what is provided in the book. Be sure to expand on this and add your own understandings based on the topic of study you’re interested in.
- Include a brief summary and description of your “map” as an introduction. Explain the possible research topic you are thinking about and how it informs what you have provided in the “map.”

Writing Assignment 3: Select a topic that you might be interested in researching and writing about for your thesis or project. Write a 500-1000 word essay on how you could complete an MAIS thesis and a project covering that particular subject. This doesn’t have to be your actual thesis or project topic. This is an exercise to see how you can approach the work you’ll do in two different ways. Do not choose to write about either the thesis or the project. You must write about both.

- In writing about the thesis, explain your research question, discuss what bodies of literature you would want to review, what research methods might you employ, what types of information/data/texts you could expect to work with in order argue/prove/discuss/analyze your points.
- In writing about the project, explain what your project would be and justify it. Discuss the different elements of the project – what would they include, and how you could go about completing them? Then address the second part of the project: the academic paper to accompany your work. Discuss why you think this project is necessary, and what areas of the academic literature lead you to conclude that there is some gap or need that your project could address.

Writing Assignment 4: TBD

Writing Assignment 5: TBD

### **Annotated Bibliographies**

You will complete 8 annotated bibliographies. An annotated bibliography is citation of a source that also includes a summary of the source and an assessment of its utility to your own research. Each citation should be followed by a brief paragraph that describes and evaluates the source, with the aim of discussing the key findings, relevance, and quality of the source. These annotated bibliographies are important in both gaining knowledge of key sources in your fields of study, and in eventually writing a literature review.

Be sure to review the materials from UNC, VCU and UMN on writing a literature review as part of this assignment (these are assigned for Week 5 and are listed below). This will help you to understand the way in which these annotations will be used later in your thesis or project.

Literature Review Sources:

- “Literature Reviews,” The Writing Center, University of North Carolina, Accessed 11/26/2018, <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/literature-reviews/>.

- Helen Mongan-Rollis, "Guidelines for Writing a Literature Review," University of Minnesota, April 19, 2018, Accessed 11/26/2018, <http://www.duluth.umn.edu/~hrallis/guides/researching/litreview.html>.
- "Write a Literature Review," VCU Libraries Research Guides, Virginia Commonwealth University, Accessed 11/26/2018, <https://guides.library.vcu.edu/lit-review>.

**IRB Certification:** One of the objectives of this class is to ensure that you have an understanding of ethical research practices. In addition to covering the subject in class, you must also complete the online certification module and submit the verification that you have received your certification. This assignment will satisfy the ethical research requirements for the degree. We use the CITI training module for Human Subjects Research. Go to <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/series/human-subjects-research-hsr/> to link to the training course. Scroll down to the course that focuses on Social, Behavioral and Educational Research. To use this, you can register through your affiliation with OSU.

### **Thesis Review**

You will choose an MAIS thesis that has been completed from your major field of study at OSU (this is flexible as some of you may be the first ones in your major field of study). You can find a thesis in the OSU Library Scholars Archive. Another good way to find one is to ask a professor from your major area, perhaps your thesis chair, for a good thesis to read. This is a good way to see the quality of work your advisor will expect. Once you have read the thesis you will write a five page critique of the thesis. This thesis review will discuss three strengths of the thesis and three weaknesses of the thesis. (This should show you that no thesis is perfect and if the thesis is in the library it passed. Consequently there has to be something good about it.) The final aspect of the review is an analysis of the interdisciplinary nature of the thesis. How well did it integrate the three areas of study? Does the thesis meet the expectations of interdisciplinary study that we are considering with respect to what has been covered in this class? This review should be organized with the following outline: introduction (create an overall judgment of the thesis that will serve as the thesis statement for your review, and then your discussion of the strengths and weaknesses will provide support for this statement), the three strengths, the three weaknesses, an assessment of interdisciplinarity, and conclusion.

### **Thesis or Project Proposal**

The main project and of the course is for you to write your thesis or project proposal. The proposal is a 7-10 page description of the research that you will pursue in completion of your degree. This work will be a preview of the thesis or the academic paper that accompanies the project, so many sections of the proposal will mirror the actual thesis or paper. The sections are roughly as follows: introduction (what is the research question in your thesis or the topic your project addresses), literature review (what are some of the key sources you're using to understand the nature of the problem), proposed research methods (this is largely for the thesis), and what you expect to find/answer in the thesis, or actually do/accomplish in the project. The proposal has to address your three fields of study and how your thesis or project incorporates all of them into the research and creative process.

### **Guidelines for a Productive and Effective Online Classroom**

Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility. Civility is an essential ingredient for academic discourse. All communications for this course should be conducted constructively, civilly, and respectfully. Differences in beliefs, opinions, and approaches are to be expected. In all you say and do for this course, be professional. Please bring any communications you believe to be in violation of this class policy to the attention of your instructor.

Active interaction with peers and your instructor is essential to success in this online course, paying particular attention to the following:

- Unless indicated otherwise, please complete the readings and view other instructional materials for each week before participating in the discussion board.
- Read your posts carefully before submitting them.
- Be respectful of others and their opinions, valuing diversity in backgrounds, abilities, and experiences.
- Challenging the ideas held by others is an integral aspect of critical thinking and the academic process. Please word your responses carefully, and recognize that others are expected to challenge your ideas. A positive atmosphere of healthy debate is encouraged.

### **Accessibility of Course Materials**

All materials used in this course are accessible. If you require accommodations please contact [Disability Access Services \(DAS\)](#).

### **Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

Accommodations for students with disabilities are determined and approved by Disability Access Services (DAS). If you, as a student, believe you are eligible for accommodations but have not obtained approval, please contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098 or at <http://ds.oregonstate.edu>. DAS notifies students and faculty members of approved academic accommodations and coordinates implementation of those accommodations. While not required, students and faculty members are encouraged to discuss details of the implementation of individual accommodations.

### **Expectations for Student Conduct**

Student conduct is governed by the university's policies, as explained in the [Student Conduct Code](#). Students are expected to conduct themselves in the course (e.g., on discussion boards, email postings) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty. For further information, visit [Student Conduct and Community Standards](#), or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

OAR 576-015-0020 (2) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty:

- a) Academic or Scholarly Dishonesty is defined as an act of deception in which a Student seeks to claim credit for the work or effort of another person, or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic work or research, either through the Student's own efforts or the efforts of another.
- b) It includes:
  - i) CHEATING - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids, or an act of deceit by which a Student attempts to misrepresent mastery of academic effort or information. This includes but is not limited to unauthorized copying or collaboration on a test or assignment, using prohibited materials and texts, any misuse of an electronic device, or using any deceptive means to gain academic credit.
  - ii) FABRICATION - falsification or invention of any information including but not limited to falsifying research, inventing or exaggerating data, or listing incorrect or fictitious references.

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- iii) ASSISTING - helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes but is not limited to paying or bribing someone to acquire a test or assignment, changing someone's grades or academic records, taking a test/doing an assignment for someone else by any means, including misuse of an electronic device. It is a violation of Oregon state law to create and offer to sell part or all of an educational assignment to another person (ORS 165.114).
  - iv) TAMPERING - altering or interfering with evaluation instruments or documents.
  - v) PLAGIARISM - representing the words or ideas of another person or presenting someone else's words, ideas, artistry or data as one's own, or using one's own previously submitted work. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to copying another person's work (including unpublished material) without appropriate referencing, presenting someone else's opinions and theories as one's own, or working jointly on a project and then submitting it as one's own.
- c) Academic Dishonesty cases are handled initially by the academic units, following the process outlined in the University's Academic Dishonesty Report Form, and will also be referred to SCCS for action under these rules.

### **Tutoring and Writing Assistance**

[NetTutor](#) is a leading provider of online tutoring and learner support services fully staffed by experienced, trained and monitored tutors. Students connect to live tutors from any computer that has Internet access. NetTutor provides a virtual whiteboard that allows tutors and students to work on problems in a real time environment. They also have an online writing lab where tutors critique and return essays within 24 to 48 hours. Access NetTutor from within your Canvas class by clicking on the Tools button in your course menu. The Oregon State [Online Writing Lab \(OWL\)](#) is also available for students enrolled in Ecampus courses.

### **Student Evaluation of Courses**

The online Student Evaluation of Teaching system opens to students during the week before finals and closes the Monday following the end of finals. Students receive notification, instructions and the link through their ONID. They may also log into the system via Online Services. Course evaluation results are extremely important and used to help improve courses and the online learning experience for future students. Responses are anonymous (unless a student chooses to "sign" their comments, agreeing to relinquish anonymity) and unavailable to instructors until after grades have been posted. The results of scaled questions and signed comments go to both the instructor and their unit head/supervisor. Anonymous (unsigned) comments go to the instructor only.