



TRMH 6200
Contemporary Issues in Tourism & Hospitality
Winter Semester, 2014



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Day and Time: 2:30 – 5:20 pm, Monday

Course Description:

The major goal of this course is to boost students' ability to develop and critically evaluate research topics in tourism, hospitality and/or food. The course will examine a variety of research trends, including classic and new topical areas.

More generally, the course concerns the research trends of tourism, hospitality or food and how to plan research in the areas of tourism, hospitality and food. Students are encouraged to choose their own research ideas and review the relevant literature to assist in the development of a research proposal.

The course will emphasize developing students' ability to generate research ideas and develop a rigorous research model that makes a contribution to knowledge. It will take a "hands on" approach to research by asking students to read and critically evaluate research, develop the study rationale, write the literature view and develop a research model. It sounds like you're trying to address the shortcomings of the Research Methods course. Probably a good idea!

Course Objectives:

- To familiarize students with major and contemporary research issues and trends in tourism, hospitality and food research.
- To enhance students' ability to develop and critically evaluate research papers.
- To develop students' understanding of how to evaluate research in terms of its contribution to knowledge
- To help students' integrate their knowledge of different research issues, and identify potential areas for future research activity.
- To socialize graduate students into the process of developing research ideas and developing researchable topics.

Course Materials and Procedures:

Journal articles and/or book chapters will be distributed via the courselink site.

There will be a set of readings (usually 2 to 3 academic journal articles and/or a book chapter) assigned for each session. It is vital that all of the required reading be thoroughly analyzed by students prior to each session. Students are required to prepare an assignment each week. You will usually be asked to prepare a 1 page (approximate, single spaced and typed) critique of an assigned article.

What a student gets out of this course depends on what the student and other classmates put into it. Each student is expected to contribute to class discussions.

Course Assessment

You are encouraged to actively seek feedback at all times as to why you received the grade you and ways of improving your grade. (Let's not make them litigious but rather reassure them that seeking feedback is expected)

Class Engagement (including Critiques)	30%
Topic Selection & Literature Search (presentation)	10%
Table of Content (LR structure) Assignment	15%
Literature Review Assignment	35%
Research Proposal Presentation	10%
	100%

Class Evaluation

Class Engagement (30%):

We should work together to make each class session a lively, stimulating, and intellectually rewarding venture in group learning. Participation in class activities and discussion is presumed as a matter of course. Students are expected to be actively engaged, attentive, and contributing when and if appropriate to class discussions. Critical dissent, probing questions, and suggestions for further investigation are not only strongly encouraged, but will be solicited actively. The manner and content of participation are closely interrelated, so respectful contribution about our various topics is welcome.

Also, one to two student(s) will be asked to prepare an article critique of two assigned readings (1 page, single spaced, times new roman) each week. Students will take 4 to 5 turns leading discussion on assigned articles during the semesters. Discussion leads will present a brief summary of the paper, prepare discussion topics/questions, and lead discussion on the paper. The participation mark will be based on participation in discussion and class contributions throughout the semester.

Topic Selection Assignment (10%):

According to Poynter (1993), selecting a research topic should be approached with the same caution as selecting a spouse. Most students find that one of the major challenges they face in conducting research

is an inability to narrow their topic so that it can be fully treated within a reasonable period of time. Identifying a research question/topic or defining the research problem that is neither too broad nor too narrow is a challenge. Few choose well the first time around. You may have to revise your research questions/topics several times. The problem encountered most often is selecting a topic that is too broad, but the reverse problem is also sometimes true. An outcome of this course should be the development of a concrete topic for your major assignment or thesis.

If necessary, students are allowed to consult their supervisor to come up with their research topic. Also, students are asked to list critical keywords (Max. 6) of their research topic. By utilizing the keywords, search 20 important state-of-the-art and key articles relating to their research topic. We will discuss how to effectively find relevant journal articles.

Based on the quick scan of the articles, ask yourself the following questions:

1. What do you know about it? What don't you know about it?
2. What aspects of your topic interest you?

A 5 to 7 minute presentation (excluding 3 to 4 minute Q/A session) should contain the following components: a selected research topic, a list of the critical keywords, importance of the research topic in tourism, hospitality or food, a list of the references used for preparing the presentation.

Submit a two page (double space) word document.

LR structure (table of content) (15%):

Every research paper is expected to have some kind of literature review. Papers in good research journals and your thesis are expected to have a fairly substantive literature review section.

“A literature review can serve many purposes. The following is a list culled from the literature:

- *Source identification.* Identifying and pinpointing documents of relevance (Rowley & Slack, 2004)
- *Comparing and contrasting previous research.* Identifying other people working in the same field (Bourner, 1996), comparing their contributions, identifying the relationships amongst studies and contrasting opposing views (Hart, 1998).
- *Identifying gaps in the literature.* Distinguishing what has already been achieved from what still needs to be understood and accomplished, thus identifying existing gaps in literature and raising questions that hold potential for exploration (Boote and Beile, 2005; Bourner, 1996).
- *Identifying issues.* Providing “a clearly organized, well-argued statement of what the literature does and does not say about some key issue or question” (Boote & Beile, 2005).
- *Defining the proposed research contributions.* Highlighting the intended contributions and justifying the research (Jonsson, 2006).
- *Building the foundation.* Providing “the foundation stone on which one's own work is built” (Massey, 1996), as well as the background to the research (Bruce, 1994).
- *Situating the work in the research literature.* Helping “the reader understand your thinking and what has impacted it, [adding] credibility to your expertise as an author, and [situating] your writing in the larger scholarly dialogue” (Hinchliffe, 2003).
- *Reinterpretation of results.* Creating “new understandings of the topic” and building a premise about what the existing evidence suggests for future inquiry (Boote & Beile, 2005)” (Khoo, Na & Jaidka, p.258).

Utilizing the techniques above, please provide a table of content structure of your literature review with references related to each sub-section. The assignment format is as follows:

Introduction

List the LR objectives

List major components of the LR rationale with references

Major discussion

List chronologically highlighted trends of the relevant studies with references

List identified scope and themes of the relevant studies with references

List identified types of research methods used with references

Conclusion

List the existing studies' flaws and gaps with references

List strategies for how you justify the flaws and gaps with references

Literature review (35%):

A literature review summarizes, interprets, and critically evaluates existing "literature" (or published materials) to establish current knowledge of a research topic. The purpose for doing so relates to ongoing research to develop that knowledge: the literature review may resolve a controversy, establish the need for additional research, and/or define a topic of inquiry.

You will need to use 20 peer-reviewed journal articles and/or book chapters that are pertinent to your research topic. Your literature review should be 10 to 12 pages long. Do not quote; always use your own words.

Literature review presentation (10%): You will present your short version literature review assignment during our final in-person class meeting. The presentation should mirror the literature review itself. The presentation will be marked on its coherence, organization and style.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Please Note: This schedule may change.

Week 1 (January 6):

Topic: Syllabus day

Activities: N/A

Week 2 (January 13):

Topic: Risk Assessment & Management

Guest speaker: Professor Tanya MacLaurin

Week 3 (January 20):

Topic: Qualitative Research

Guest speaker: Professor Justin Taillon

Week 4 (January 27):

Topic: Competitiveness and the Food Industry

Guest speaker: Professor Erna van Duren

Week 5 (February 3):

Topic: Revenue Management

Guest speaker: Professor Mike Von Massow

Week 6 (February 10)

Topic: Medical, health and wellness tourism

Guest speaker: Professor Marion Joppe

Week 7 (February 24):

Topic: Consumer Behaviour & IT Research in Tourism & Hospitality

Speaker: Professor Chris Choi

Week 8 (March 3):

Topic: Coping behaviour & Food consumption

Guest speaker: Professor Sunghwan Yi

Week 9 (March 10):

Topic: Destination Image and Tourism Behaviour

Guest speaker: Professor Stacia Elliot

Week 10 (March 17):

Topic: The industry trends and research directions

Required Readings: TBA

Week 11 (March 24):

Guest speaker: TBA

Activities: Final review

Week 12 (March 31):

Final Presentation & Wrap up/ Literature review assignment due