

Library Science Degree Program  
College of Education  
East Carolina University  
Revised: May 27, 2022

## **LIBS 6872: Research Methods in Library and Information Studies**

**East Carolina University**  
**College of Education**  
**Department of Interdisciplinary Professions**  
**Master of Library Science Program: <https://education.ecu.edu/idp/idp-library-science>**

**Spring 2022**

**Instructor:** Dr. Kawanna Bright

**Office:** Ragsdale 112

**Office Hours:** Email: M-F, any reasonable time of the day; Virtual office hours; Tuesdays, 2:00pm – 5:00pm; Wednesdays 5:00pm – 8:00pm; By appointment

**Contact: Phone:** 252-737-1150

**E-mail:** [brightka19@ecu.edu](mailto:brightka19@ecu.edu); in the unlikely chance that the ECU email system goes down, I can also be reached at my personal email: [drkawannab@gmail.com](mailto:drkawannab@gmail.com).

**Contacting Your Instructor:** I monitor my email throughout the day during regular office hours from Monday through Friday. I endeavor to respond to all messages within 24-hours, though you should allow a 48-hour window for answers, especially during weekends when I am less likely to check my email. If you have not received a response to your e-mail after 48 hours, please resend your message or consider calling and leaving a message on my office phone. You can also request a meeting with me during my office hours using my Bookings calendar:

<https://outlook.office365.com/owa/calendar/DrBrightsOfficeHours@studentsecuedu66932.onmicrosoft.com/bookings/>

**Please note:** This syllabus may be subject to change before or during the CURRENT semester. Changes to the syllabus will be posted as Course Announcements.

### **Prerequisites:**

- LIBS 6010 - Foundations of Library and Information Studies
- LIBS 6019 - Research Literacy in Library Science

### **About the Course**

Conducting research and contributing to the professional knowledge of our profession is an essential skill for you as a professional librarian. This course will build on the various types of research and resources in library and information studies introduced in LIBS 6019. LIBS 6872 offers an opportunity to apply these techniques and strategies through the definition, identification, and evaluation of research problems.

### **Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Apply research designs, including research instruments and data coding methods
- Discuss possible research methods to employ to assess various library services
- Assess the strengths and limitations of particular research tools and methodologies
- Connect evaluation of services with service improvement, best practices, and accountability of libraries

## **Program and Professional Goals, Objectives, Standards, and Competencies**

### ***MLS Program Goals:***

3. To engage in scholarship and service

### ***MLS Program Objectives:***

2. Analyze, evaluate and synthesize research literature in library and information science and design basic practitioner research

### ***ALA Core Competencies***

#### **Competency 1: Foundations of the Profession**

1I. The techniques used to analyze complex problems and create appropriate solutions.

1J. Effective communication techniques (verbal and written).

#### **Competence 4: Technological Knowledge and Skills**

4C. The methods of assessing and evaluating the specifications, efficacy, and cost efficiency of technology-based products and services.

4D. The principles and techniques necessary to identify and analyze emerging technologies and innovations in order to recognize and implement relevant technological improvements.

#### **Competency 5: Reference and User Services**

5B. Techniques used to retrieve, evaluate, and synthesize information from diverse sources for use by individuals of all ages and groups.

5D. Information literacy/information competence techniques and methods, numerical literacy, and statistical literacy.

5F. The principles of assessment and response to diversity in user needs, user communities, and user preferences.

5G. The principles and methods used to assess the impact of current and emerging situations or circumstances on the design and implementation of appropriate services or resource development.

#### **Competency 6: Research**

6A. The fundamentals of quantitative and qualitative research methods.

6B. The central research findings and research literature of the field.

6C. The principles and methods used to assess the actual and potential value of new research.

#### **Competency 8: Administration and Management**

8C. The concepts behind, and methods for, assessment and evaluation of library services and their outcomes.

### ***AASL Standards Framework for Learning***

**I. Inquire:** *Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.*

**A1.** *Formulating questions about a personal interest or a curricular topic.*

- A2. *Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.*
- B1. *Using evidence to investigate questions.*
- B2. *Devising and implementing a plan to fill knowledge gaps.*
- B3. *Generating products that illustrate learning.*
- D1. *Continually seeking knowledge.*
- D2. *Engaging in sustained inquiry.*
- D3. *Enacting new understanding through real-world connections.*
- D4. *Using reflection to guide informed decisions.*

**IV. Curate:** *Make meaning for oneself and others by collecting, organizing, and sharing resources of personal relevance.*

- A1. *Determining the need to gather information.*
- A2. *Identifying possible sources of information.*
- A3. *Making critical choices about information sources to use.*
- B1. *Seeking a variety of sources.*
- B2. *Collecting information representing diverse perspectives*
- B3. *Systematically questioning and assessing the validity and accuracy of information.*
- B4. *Organizing information by priority, topic, or other systematic scheme.*

**V. Explore:** *Discover and innovate in a growth mindset developed through experience and reflection.*

- A1. *Reading widely and deeply in multiple formats and write and create for a variety of purposes.*
- A2. *Reflecting and questioning assumptions and possible misconceptions.*
- A3. *Engaging in inquiry-based processes for personal growth.*
- B1. *Problem solving through cycles of design, implementation, and reflection.*

### **About Your Instructor:**

I have extensive experience working within libraries and with libraries to help them achieve their goals, including those related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). I was an academic librarian for twelve years before earning my PhD in Research Methods and Statistics. My research often focuses on libraries as workplaces, with an emphasis on the people (librarians, staff, and students) in those workplaces. I serve as a DEI consultant, focusing on helping libraries assess their DEI needs as an organization.

### **Course Resources:**

#### **Course Textbook:**

Wildemuth, B. M. (2016). *Applications of social research methods to questions in information and library science* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Pearson Education. **(ECU Libraries offers full text access for this title: <https://go.exlibris.link/CfKqv6NX>)**

Additional readings will also be assigned throughout the course. All additional readings are either available online (free or through the ECU Libraries) or will be posted as a document on Canvas.

### **ADA Compliance:**

East Carolina University seeks to fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodation based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Services, located in Brewster A-114, to verify the disability before any accommodations can occur. The telephone number is 252-328-6799.

**Course Attendance Policy:**

This is an online, asynchronous course. While there are no set weekly meetings, all work is expected to be completed individually, based on the posted course schedule. Students are expected to follow the course calendar and participate in discussion boards and other activities as assigned.

**Course Schedule & Assignment Due Dates\***

<b>Modules: Topics &amp; Readings</b>	<b>Assignments/ Activities Due</b>
<p><b>Module 1 (January 10<sup>th</sup> – January 23<sup>rd</sup>): Research Foundations</b></p> <p><b>LIBS 6019: Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Finding Peer Reviewed sources (Lecture &amp; Screencast)</li> </ul> <p><b>Research Questions and Problem Statements</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 2</li> <li>• Read: How to Write Research Questions (Document)</li> <li>• Read: There is no “I” in Research (Document)</li> <li>• Read: Hernon, P. (2001). Components of the research process: Where do we need to focus attention? <i>Journal of Academic Librarianship</i>, 27(2), 81-89.</li> </ul> <p><b>Research in Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Introduction, Problem Statement, &amp; Research Question(s) (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Sample paper problem statement, intro and research questions (Document)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class Introductions (January 16<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Assignment #1: Topic, Research Question, and Problem Statement (January 23<sup>rd</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Research Journal Entry #1 (January 23<sup>rd</sup>)</b></p>
<p><b>Module 2 (January 24<sup>th</sup> – February 6<sup>th</sup>): Research Principles</b></p> <p><b>Framework</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: The Framework (Lecture)</li> </ul> <p><b>Literature Review</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: The Literature Review (Lecture)</li> </ul> <p><b>Sampling</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 14 &amp; Chapter 15</li> <li>• Watch: Sampling (Lecture)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assignment #2: The Literature Review (February 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Research Journal Entry #2 (February 6<sup>th</sup>)</b>  <b>*IRB Submission (February 6<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>
<p><b>Module 3 (February 7<sup>th</sup> – March 5<sup>th</sup>): Research Design and Data Collection</b></p> <p><b>Research Design</b></p>	<p><b>Assignment #3: Research Design (February 20<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>

<p><i>Naturalistic vs Post Positivist</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Naturalistic versus Post Positivist approaches to research design (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 8</li> </ul> <p><i>Experimental Research Design</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 11 &amp; Chapter 12</li> </ul> <p><i>Action Research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Action research (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: TBD</li> </ul> <p><i>Mixed Methods Research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Mixed methods (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 13</li> </ul> <p><i>Case Studies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Case studies (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 7</li> </ul> <p><b>Methods of Data Collection</b></p> <p><i>Survey Research</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Survey research (Lecture)</li> <li>• Watch: Survey construction (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 28</li> </ul> <p><i>Ethnography</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Ethnography (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 22 &amp; Chapter 23</li> </ul> <p><i>Interviews &amp; Focus Groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Interviews &amp; Focus groups (Lecture)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 25, Chapter 26, &amp; Chapter 27</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assignment #4: Data Collection (March 5<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Research Journal Entry #3 (March 5<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>
<p><b>Spring Break (March 6<sup>th</sup> – March 13<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Module 4 (March 14<sup>th</sup> – April 10<sup>th</sup>): Analysis of Data</b></p> <p><b>Quantitative Data Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Quantitative Data Analysis, Part 1 (Lecture)</li> <li>• Watch: Quantitative Data Analysis, Part 2 (Lecture)</li> <li>• Watch: Example of Quantitative Data Analysis (Screencast)</li> <li>• Watch: Discussion of Assignment 5: Quantitative Data Analysis (Screencast)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 35, Chapter 36, Chapter 38 &amp; Chapter 39</li> </ul> <p><b>Qualitative Data Analysis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Qualitative Data Analysis (Lecture)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assignment #5: Quantitative Data Analysis (March 27<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Assignment #6: Qualitative Data Analysis (April 10<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Research Journal Entry #4 (April 10<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Qualitative Data Analysis Example (Screencast)</li> <li>• Read: Wildemuth Chapter 31 &amp; Chapter 32</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Module 5 (April 11<sup>th</sup> – April 26<sup>th</sup>): Research Essentials</b></p> <p><b>Ethics of Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Ethical Considerations of LIS Research (Lecture)</li> </ul> <p><b>Presenting Research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Research Presentation Options (Lecture)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pilot Study Presentation (April 17<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Research Ethics Quiz (April 26<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <p><b>Research Journal Entry #5 (April 26<sup>th</sup>)</b></p>
<p><b>Finals Week (April 28<sup>th</sup> – May 5<sup>th</sup>)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch: Final Assignment Reminder (Lecture)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pilot Study (April 28<sup>th</sup> – Canvas; May 5<sup>th</sup> – TaskStream)</b></p>

\*All work is due by 11:59pm EST on the date specified. Late work will be accepted but will incur a late penalty as outlined in this syllabus.

### Course expectations:

As your instructor, I will provide expertise and guidance through lectures, readings, activities, and discussions, serving as a facilitator of your learning. As students, there are expectations I have for you, for your success in this course. These include but are not exclusive to:

- **Self-motivation:** Please try to stay on task, meet deadlines and plan to attend any online sessions that you sign up for. I will stay in touch with you through email and Canvas.
- **Ability to schedule own activities and effectively manage time:** make sure you understand the consequences of not adhering to assignment and project deadlines.
- **Ability to follow written and spoken instructions:** Please read the entire syllabus and all instructions included with assignments. If you have **any** questions, please feel free to contact me, before an assignment is due.
- **Ability to start work in a timely manner:** You should seek help promptly when questions or problems arise. Please don't wait until the assignment is almost due (within a day of the due date) or already overdue to communicate with me about any problems you are having with an assignment or with the course.
- **Willingness to collaborate on group assignments or projects:** Collaboration, defined as a group of people working together toward a common goal, is an essential part of learning in an online environment. You may be asked to work with others or to participate in group activities. You should look at collaboration as an opportunity to develop important interpersonal and management skills.

### Assignments

Assignment Schedule

Assignment	Due Date	Point Value
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<b>#1: Research Question and Problem Statement</b>	<b>January 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	100
<b>Research Journal Entry #1</b>	<b>January 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	20
<b>#2: The Literature Review</b>	<b>February 6<sup>th</sup></b>	100
<b>Research Journal Entry #2</b>	<b>February 6<sup>th</sup></b>	20
<b>#3: Research Design</b>	<b>February 20<sup>th</sup></b>	50
<b>#4: Data Collection</b>	<b>March 5<sup>th</sup></b>	50
<b>Research Journal Entry #3</b>	<b>March 5<sup>th</sup></b>	20
<b>#5: Quantitative Data Analysis</b>	<b>March 27<sup>th</sup></b>	50
<b>#6: Qualitative Data Analysis</b>	<b>April 10<sup>th</sup></b>	100
<b>Research Journal Entry #4</b>	<b>April 10<sup>th</sup></b>	20
<b>Pilot Study Presentation</b>	<b>April 17<sup>th</sup></b>	50
<b>Research Ethics Quiz</b>	<b>April 26<sup>th</sup></b>	50
<b>Research Journal Entry #5</b>	<b>April 26<sup>th</sup></b>	20
<b>Final Pilot Study</b> <b>(Turn in BOTH on Canvas AND Taskstream)</b>	<b>April 28<sup>th</sup> (Canvas); May 5<sup>th</sup> (Taskstream)</b>	100
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>750</b>

Detailed directions for each assignment are found under Assignments on the Canvas course site.

### **Research Question and Problem Statement (100 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to outline the basic foundation for a research project; Identify a library and information science topic for investigation; and Apply principles of research in order to create a research question and problem statement.

### **Literature Review (100 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to construct a literature review which is relevant to investigating a professional problem; and select research literature relevant to a specific library science topic.

### **Research Design (50 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to discuss the attributes of a chosen research design approach in the context of a chosen research question; and apply a specific research design to a research question and scenario previously chosen.

### **Data Collection (50 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to choose a data collection method that best fits the research question, purpose of the research, and research design method selected; and outline a study's methodology through the principles of data collection.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis (50 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to apply descriptive and inferential statistics in the analysis of a quantitative data set; and to interpret the results of the quantitative analysis by writing some basic findings.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis (50 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to apply the principles of qualitative data coding to an available transcript; provide support for analysis and findings based on available qualitative data; and formulate specific conclusions based on qualitative data.

### **Research Ethics Quiz (50 points)**

The research ethics quiz serves as a check-in for students to ensure they are aware of the common concerns related to research ethics and have considered those concerns in the design of their own pilot study.

### **Research Journal (100 points)**

The goals of the research journal are to provide students with a methods for keeping track of their research throughout the semester; to offer check-in points where the instructor can review students' progress towards their study and offer feedback; and to offer students hands-on experience with a standard research methodology.

### **Pilot Study Presentation (50 points)**

The goals of this assignment are to design a presentation to highlight the design and findings of a pilot research study; and to apply visual presentation standards in the creation of a professional research presentation.

### **Final Pilot Study (100 points)**

For this study, you will conduct a pilot research project for a library and information science (LIS) topic of interest and which you deem worthy of research. This includes a literature review, methodology, data analysis, and findings of the research.

## **Grades & Grading:**

This is a graduate level course, and as such points for assignments will be based on the following criteria:

- Adherence to assignment requirements
- Detailed, concise and logical presentation of information that addresses the assignment requirements
- Use of resource materials to justify responses (when necessary)
- Compositional style and use of appropriate grammar and syntax
- Other aspects considered on individual assignment rubrics

Written work that demonstrates a lack of understanding of subject matter, is unclear or poorly organized, contains few details or presents irrelevant material, does not follow directions, contains little or unsubstantiated evaluative commentary, or is otherwise poorly written, prepared (e.g. typos, grammatical errors) or documented will receive fewer points. These criteria are considered in addition to any requirements on specific assignment rubrics.

Please remember that while an electronic spell check of a document will note most misspellings, spell checkers do not recognize context and verb agreement. If grammar, syntax and spelling are not your strengths, it is suggested you find an editor to review your assignments prior to submission. Your instructor is not a proofreader and will send materials requiring extensive copy edits back to the student without a grade.

**Final grades** will be based on the following scale:



Letter Grade	Percentage*
<b>A</b>	93.00-100.00%
<b>B</b>	86.00-92.99%
<b>C</b>	79.00-85.99%
<b>F</b>	Below 79.00%

\*Rounding of points is at the discretion of the instructor.

**\*\*W (Withdrawal)** Withdrawal from the course can be done within the time period specified by the University in the *Academic Calendar*: <https://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/calendar/spring2022.pdf>. If you feel you must drop this course, please see Withdrawal from Distance Education Courses <https://registrar.ecu.edu/course-drops-withdrawal-policy/> for the procedures to follow. Also, inform me (your instructor), your advisor, and the Department of Library Science office.

**Incompletes:** Incompletes may be considered, but *only as a result of serious and unexpected health and/or life situation*. Documentation for the request is required in writing, most commonly in the form of an email, with appropriate signatures or other evidence if necessary. **At least 50% of the course's required assignments must be completed in order to receive an incomplete. If this condition is not met, students are expected to withdraw from the course.**

Incompletes must be made up promptly by a deadline set by the instructor **and** before the deadline set by the Registrar's Office which is indicated in the academic calendar for every semester. Students who are unable to complete assignments when due are expected to withdraw from the course. The deadline for graduate students to drop a course without a grade is mid-semester, so it would have to be an extreme case for the instructor to agree to an 'I' rather than suggesting the student drop the course. For more information about removing an incomplete, see the registrar's page (See 'Removal of Incomplete': [http://catalog.ecu.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=578&hl=%22incomplete%22&returnto=search#Removal\\_of\\_Incompletes](http://catalog.ecu.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=578&hl=%22incomplete%22&returnto=search#Removal_of_Incompletes)

### **Assignment Submission Reminders**

**Late Policy:** Written assignments are **due by 11:59 pm EST of the date indicated**. Anything received after that hour is considered late. **Assignments submitted late (i.e. any time after the hour or due date) will be subject to a 10% deduction of the total value per day that it is late. After 4 days, assignments not submitted will still be accepted but will only receive a maximum of 50% of the total available points.**

**Extensions:** This course has a 3-day no questions asked extension policy that you can use for **any two major assignments** in the course. A major assignment is any assignment worth 100 points. To request an extension, simply e-mail the instructor prior to the due date, stating that you will be taking the 3-day extension and indicate which assignment. No explanations are needed. Your assignment will automatically be due 3 days after the original due date of the assignment. The course late policy will apply after the additional 3 days.

Submit all assignments in a 12-point font for readability, double-spaced format with 1-inch margins unless otherwise noted.

As soon as assignments are graded you will receive my comments regarding various aspects of the work in terms of the criteria for evaluation and the grade. These will be noted as comments on the document in Canvas.

All written assignments are to be turned in through Canvas as Word or PDF documents. All work submitted to Canvas will be considered to be in its final version and will be graded as such.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

You are expected to do your own work. In this class, cheating is defined as copying someone else's work either through direct quotation or paraphrasing without giving that person credit. Cheating is also paying someone to do your work. Please refer to the ECU Student Handbook for further information on ECU's policy on academic honesty. This policy will be strictly enforced

### **Student support:**

- Contact Information Technology and Computing Services (ITCS) at <https://itcs.ecu.edu/students/> if Canvas or other technology does not work properly. ITCS phone support is available 8 am to midnight by calling 252-328-9866 or 1-800-340-7081.
- For student advising, please contact your advisor for general questions.
- To learn more about the Joyner Library, access the Online tutorials at <https://library.ecu.edu/help/tutorials/>
- Access <https://library.ecu.edu/help/distance-education/> to learn more about library services for distance education (DE) students. DE students who live outside of Pitt County are entitled to free document delivery (i.e., books at Joyner are sent to your home at no cost to you) as well as a library card to access any of the libraries in the UNC university system.
- ECU's Writing Center, Online Writing Lab (OWL): <https://writing.ecu.edu/uwc/>