PhD Program in Communication, Information and Library Studies

Course Descriptions – Doctoral Classes
Spring 2015

Our interdisciplinary PhD Program attracts students from fields such as cultural studies, sociology, history, film and cinema, as well as linguistics, computer science, public health, psychology, and business/management—in courses shared with students with backgrounds in information science, communication, media studies, journalism, and library studies. We offer multiple seminars every semester, almost all of which welcome doctoral students from other programs at Rutgers as well as students at other schools participating in the Inter-University Doctoral Consortium, which allows taking Rutgers courses for credit across the consortium. See more at: http://gsnb.rutgers.edu/consortium.php3.

For more information contact PhD Program Director Marie Radford at mradford@rutgers.edu.

https://comminfo.rutgers.edu/phd-program/phd-program.html

Last revised 1/30/15
PhD Colloquium (16:194:600)
Fridays, 1:30 - 3:30 pm (and some Wednesdays, as announced)
PhD Director

Description:
PhD Colloquium is a forum for the presentation of research and professional activities by guest speakers, faculty, and students taken during each semester of course work.

List of PhD Colloquia (The Dissertation Series) and other relevant events including the schedule for the PhD Mini Seminars (on selected Fridays) is at:
https://comminfo.rutgers.edu/ph-d-program/interaction-meetings/colloquia.html

Qualitative Research Methods (16:194:603)
Tuesdays, 3:10 - 5:50 pm
Marie Radford
mradford@rutgers.edu

Description:
This course explores the philosophical and theoretical bases of qualitative approaches to research and provides opportunities to learn and experiment with the methods and tools used by researchers seeking to understand important issues in information, communication, and media studies through qualitative approaches. The goals are: a) for you to be able to apply these methods successfully in your own work, when relevant (that is, that you would also know when any of these would be appropriate, either alone or in combination with other research strategies and tools, given your research topic and your central questions/problems), b) that you understand what kinds of claims you could or could not make with your research; c) that you can compare various ways of "knowing," and d) that you become a discerning and critical, and, perhaps, even appreciative, consumer of qualitative research.

Primary Readings:

Assignments/Projects:
There will be a variety of projects and assignments required including: critiques of required readings, conduct and analysis of an in-depth interview, small group position
paper and oral presentation, model/case study critique, and development of a research proposal.

Other Information for Interested Students:
Pre-requisites 601 & 602. Required for LIS Area. Communication students must take either this course or 605. Media Studies students must take 2 of the 3 (603, 604, 605) methods courses.

Human Information Behavior (16:194:612)
Tuesday, 6:20 – 9:00 pm
Nicholas Belkin
belkin@rutgers.edu

Description:
This course will focus upon the relations between information behavior and information systems design. Students will analyze philosophical, cognitive, interpersonal, organizational, social, political and cultural theories and empirical investigations, within the framework of the following topics:
- Understanding why and how humans engage in information behaviors
- Characterizing human information behaviors
- Relating information use to other forms of information behavior
- Relating information behavior to information system design (both social and technical)
- Analyzing existing information systems according to these relations.

Theories & Issues in Library Studies (16:194:656)
Wednesdays 6:20 – 9:00
Ross Todd
rtodd@rutgers.edu

Description:
This seminar-based course examines the intellectual foundations for librarianship as a discipline, and pertinent allied fields (such as Information Science), and the development of a broadened understanding of pervasive theories and research issues, and the identification and exploration of research literature in librarianship and these allied fields. (This course will focus on classic and contemporary theories in library and information science, as considered in the context of the research process. Emphasis will be placed on the importance of theoretical constructs as the basis for original research in various aspects of the discipline.

Goals:
This seminar will offer students:
1. A broad understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of the discipline of librarianship.
2. Familiarity with the historical, contemporary, and anticipated future development of research issues.
3. Opportunities to critically analyze, evaluate, and initiate research in the field.

Objectives:
Upon completion of course, students should be able to:
- Demonstrate familiarity with a variety of theoretical approaches in LIS.
- Provide an in-depth description and critique of one or more theoretical approaches in LIS.
- Discuss a variety of philosophical approaches to theory.
- Demonstrate understanding of theory development in LIS and allied fields.
- Demonstrate knowledge of how concerns with theory and method have taken shape.
- Identify a wide variety of the important research fronts in LS and cognate disciplines.

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Measurement and Psychometrics (16:194:670)
Mondays, 11:50 – 2:30 pm
Kathryn Greene
klgreene@rutgers.edu

Description:
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Communication Theory (16:194:671)
Thursdays, 3:10 – 5:50 pm
Itzhak Yanovitzky
itzhak@rutgers.edu

Description:
This doctoral seminar is about theory, theory development, and theory application in social science in general and communication research in particular. It begins with an overview and discussion of the building blocks and meta-theoretical assumptions that form the foundations of many social scientific theories. It then explores systematically processes and principals that underlie theory construction and model-building. Finally, it invites students to engage, both individually and as a group, in the deconstruction and critical analysis of classes of theories, logical systems, and evidence used in the study of communication. While the course is not intended to offer a comprehensive overview
of major communication theories, it does offer students the opportunity to engage meaningfully with a theory or a set of theories that inform their own research.

**Course Learning Objectives:**
At the end of this course, students will:
1. Be familiar with the terminology and foundations of social science theory and theory construction.
2. Develop a complete understanding of the various processes and principals that guide the construction and testing of theories and theoretical assumptions.
3. Demonstrate ability to assess the theoretical contribution of research articles, and to critique and improve research ideas of others and one’s own.
4. Construct a communication theory of their own or suggest improvements or revisions of an existing theory.
5. Be capable of engaging intellectually and analytically with the topic of theorizing in communication.

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**Media, Affect, Subjectivity (16:194:680)**
Thursdays, 3:10 – 5:50 pm
Jack Bratich
jbratich@rutgers.edu

**Description:**
This course is based on a “critical cultural studies” approaches to media, one that foregrounds the relationship between culture, power, and subjectivity. This course will address the rise of what has been called the “affective turn” in social theory to understand recent mutations in mediated selves, individual and collective. It will focus on the intersection of mediated affect with forms of subjectivation.

Some of the topics covered: the mediation of affect, (post)feminist ambivalence, immaterial labor, collective action, social movements, pathologies, love, digital life and embodiment. Along the way, we’ll discuss a variety of media examples: reality tv, social media, virtual worlds, propaganda, zines, brands.

By the end of the course, students will be able to identify key emergent themes in media and cultural studies, analyze media artifacts and texts with sophisticated theoretical tools, and engage in contemporary debates about mediated subjectivity.

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**Media Institutions & Organizations (16:194:681)**
Mondays, 3:10 – 5:50 pm
Phil Napoli
philipn@rci.rutgers.edu

**Description:**
This course explores the subfield of journalism and media studies scholarship that has focused on understanding media institutions both as routines, norms, rules, or behavioral guidelines that guide media practices, and as formal, complex organizations engaged in the full range of activities connected with the functioning of media systems. This body of scholarship has been concerned with understanding the structures, practices, and norms through which the processes of producing and distributing content; measuring and valuing audiences; developing and refining technologies; and formulating and implementing laws and policies, take place. This body of scholarship draws from a range of disciplines and theoretical and methodological approaches across the social sciences and humanities, including communication, journalism, film and media studies, sociology, economics, political science, organizational behavior, and history.

The goals of this course are to: 1) provide students with a grounding in the intellectual history of this subfield; 2) have students engage in in-depth explorations and critiques of both historically significant and contemporary exemplars of media institutions and organizations scholarship; and 3) have students produce high quality critical, theoretical, or empirical work that contributes to the literature on media institutions and organizations.

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Organizational Communication Research (16:194:621)
Mondays, 6:20 – 9:00 pm
Craig Scott
crscott@rutgers.edu

Description:
This course is an introductory doctoral- and advanced masters-level course focused on the diverse array of topics studied in organizational communication research. We will examine the role of communication in issues such as socialization and identification; power, conflict and control; decision making and leadership; ethics, performance, and feedback; turnover, burnout, and exit; culture; structure and networks; as well as image and reputation. It is based on theory and research, but will address topics that are very applied and practical.

The course will include weekly discussion and leadership of readings, two small theme papers, and one team-based practical research project. Doctoral and masters students will be given slightly different assignments to help meet their needs and encourage appropriate intellectual development. For more information, contact Craig Scott at crscott@rutgers.edu.

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Communication About Sexual Health & Relationships (16:194:672)
Tuesdays, 6:20 – 9:00 pm
Jennifer Theiss
jtheiss@rutgers.edu
Description:
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Dynamics of Global Organizations (16:194:674)
Thursdays, 6:20 – 9:00 pm
Jenn Gibbs
jgibbs@rutgers.edu

Description:
This course aims to provide deeper insight into the contested phenomenon of globalization and its implications for organizations and processes of organizing. Topics covered include globalization theory and theoretical perspectives, global strategy and leadership, organizational culture and cross-cultural issues, the role of technology, global and virtual teams, global networks, knowledge sharing, identification, and social justice. Students taking this course will gain awareness of the complexities of organizing across national boundaries and the role of communication in this process, as well as assessing the implications of globalization for today’s organizations, including both corporations and non-profits, governmental and private.

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