

ENG-W 368 Research Methods and Materials Spring 2013 Course Syllabus MW 11:30am-12:45pm KO 101 Telephone: 765/455.9229	Instructor: Paul Cook Office: KO 232 E-mail: paulcook@iuk.edu Office Hours: T, 11am-2:00pm and W, 2-3:00pm or by appointment
---	---

Research Methods and Materials: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Knowledge-Making in English Studies

This course will introduce you to research as an ongoing, recursive practice of inquiry and knowledge-making. By examining a variety of research methods and methodologies (including quantitative research, ethnography and other qualitative studies, textual and theoretical research, archival research, etc.), you will learn how to develop an idea, plan a research project, go about gathering data (whatever “data” may be in any given case), perform analysis, and present your work to an audience. In short, this course will be guided and informed by the question: *how do researchers create knowledge?*

Research Methods and Materials builds on the assumption that research is connected to context, and that what information is included/excluded and how that information is interpreted/discussed impacts the reception of the research. Therefore, we will explore a number of different research “contexts” within English studies (i.e., literary studies, writing studies, and rhetoric), and we will also examine emerging digital research tools and their impact on research.

The course will be divided into two overlapping and interwoven parts. For roughly the first half of the semester, we will concentrate *primarily* on so-called “**traditional,**” **library-based research** and the assorted skills and practices that go along with it—textual analysis, digital research strategies, archival research, problem statements, literature reviews, and so forth. A good portion of the second half of the semester, which will include a greater focus on research in writing studies and rhetoric (English studies’ other half), will be devoted *primarily* to **empirical research models**, and we will explore various types of quantitative and qualitative research methods: ethnographies and case studies, surveys, personal interviews, and field work. It’s important to note at the outset that these are general categories; they’re broad and they tend to overlap both conceptually and practically. So while I will try to delineate between the two and avoid unnecessary confusion as much as possible, it may at times seem as though we are bouncing back and forth.

At the end of the semester, you will be able to:

Learning Outcomes and Objectives	Assessment
Define common research methodologies used in literary studies, literary history, writing studies, and rhetoric;	Lectures, class discussions, and final project
Utilize digital research tools;	In-class activities, literature review, and final project
Evaluate and critique published research;	Daily assignments, lectures, class discussions, literature review, and final project
Recognize strengths and weaknesses of research methodologies in published studies;	Daily assignments, lecture, class discussions, literature review, and final project
Practice several research methods on a small scale through in-class activities and discussions;	Daily assignments, homework, and in-class activities
Design, research, plan, and develop a literature review;	Literature review and research journal
Propose, plan, and conduct a large-scale research study.	Final project and research journal

Required Texts

Blakeslee, Ann and Cathy Fleischer, eds. *Becoming a Writing Researcher*. New York: Routledge, 2010. Print.

Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*. 1915. Trans. and ed. Stanley Corngold. New York: Norton, 1996. Print.

[***Note: Most editions will do just fine and can be had cheaply, but the Norton Critical Edition comes with a wealth of supplemental materials and explanatory footnotes. Check with me if you have concerns or questions about which edition to purchase.]

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: MLA, 2009. Print.

Supplemental Readings: I will frequently post excerpts, articles, and chapters to Oncourse; typically, these will be in .pdf format. You are *required* to print these .pdfs in their entirety, read them, and bring them to class with you on the appropriate days. I understand that this entails an extra cost, so you should budget your printing costs over the course of the semester as a sort of “fourth” text.

Assignments and Grading

In-class Activities, or “ICAs” (10%): In-class activities will be graded on a four-point scale (4=excellent, 3=acceptable, 2=severely lacking, 1=poor, 0=no credit).

Research Journal, or “RJ” (20%): Your research journal is where you will write the majority of your responses to the “Prompts” in *Becoming a Writing Researcher*, though occasionally we will work through a “Prompt” together in class (in which case the “Prompt” will be graded as an “ICA”). In addition, your RJ is the repository for all of your lecture notes, ideas, brainstorm, keywords (search terms), bibliographic entries, timelines/schedules, freewrites, musings, jottings, and so forth. I will randomly collect RJs a couple of times over the course of the semester to get a sense of how you’re doing and to make sure you’re keeping up with “Prompts” and other activities. I recommend using a sturdy spiral-bound notebook (preferably one with pockets) that you bring to class with you every meeting.

Class Participation (10%): See “Attendance and Participation” below.

Problem Statement (5%)

Literature Review (15%)

Final Project Research Proposal (5%)

Final Project (35%): Your final project represents the culmination of your work in this class. It will be a 10-12 page research study incorporating between 8-10 sources. Most (maybe even all) of you will design, research, and develop a final project that is related to *some* aspect of Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* (as you will learn there are many, many possibilities), though I will consider proposals for other projects on a case-by-case basis. If you think you might want to design and develop a project that doesn’t involve Kafka or *The Metamorphosis* in some way, you must consult with me about your project idea as soon as possible.

=100%

Attendance and Participation

While there will be *some* lecture in this course, this class is not a lecture-only course. Given the small size of the class, it’s vital to the overall success of this course that you come to class regularly, complete the readings, make time to reflect on what you’ve read, take careful notes on the readings and lectures, and participate enthusiastically in class discussions. Baseline (“C”-level) participation requirements are that you come to class every time we meet, take notes, and complete all assigned readings. Contributing thoughtful comments and asking questions will raise your participation grade to a “B.” Consistently contributing interesting and insightful comments and ideas and providing leadership in class discussions will earn an “A.”

When you miss class, you miss important information and mandatory in-class activities (which cannot be made-up), and classmates miss your input and ideas. **If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what we covered in class and for submitting in advance any assignments due on that day.** I reserve the right to change the course schedule at any time, and it is your responsibility to stay on top of these changes. If you feel comfortable doing so, swap cell numbers or e-mail addresses with the person next to you; this way, if ever you do miss class, you can find out what you missed with little to no trouble.

Your course grade will drop by one letter grade (10%) if you miss more than 10% of our classes (**4 class periods**); you will fail the course if you miss 20% of our classes (**6 class periods**). If an emergency forces you to miss several class periods, contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss your options.

Grades

A standard ten-point scale (A+=97-100; A=94-96; A-=90-93; B+=87-89; B=84-86; B-=80-83; C+=77-79; C=74-76; C-=70-73; D+=67-69; D=64-66; D-=60-63; F=everything else) will be used.

Late Assignments

Late work will not be accepted under any circumstances. If a *bona fide* emergency (e.g., a death in your immediate family, long-term hospitalization, arrest or incarceration, etc.) forces you to miss class, please let me know as soon as is reasonable so that we can discuss your options.

Office Hours

Please feel free to drop by during my office hours or make an appointment for another time. I want to discuss the class and your work with you, and utilizing office hours is an excellent way for us to address any concerns you might have about the class, your progress or performance, and/or any of your questions about the course material and your projects and interests.

Writing Center (Library KA 128)

Don't forget to utilize the Writing Center that your tuition dollars have already gone to support! The IUK Writing Center is open Monday through Thursday, 9am to 7pm, Friday, 10am to 2pm, and Saturday, 12:30-4:30pm. Remember, many of IUK's very best students understand that seeking out a response to one's writing is a necessary part of the learning/writing process. Several of the staff who presently work in the Center have or are currently working toward a teaching license, and many are graduate students. Stop by or call for a 30 minute appointment: 455-9425, Option #1.

You can now instant message the tutors your quick questions (grammar, citing, etc.) using campus contacts. Visit our website at <http://www.iuk.edu/writing-center> where you can

- Ask a more detailed question online by using Ask a Tutor email option.
- See a list of *Grammar Girl* podcasts on hundreds of usage and other English language concerns.
- Discover which helpful documents and other sources are available at the Center.
- Find out when your favorite tutor is scheduled to work.

Oncourse and E-mail

We will be using Oncourse to (a) keep track of graded assignments, (b) complete some out of class assignments, (c) participate in discussion forums, (d) post and download important documents and information, and (e) communicate with each other over the course of the semester. When possible, please use the messaging function in Oncourse to send messages to me. (This is the best way to get in touch with me, although sending e-mails directly to **paulcook@iuk.edu** is fine, too.) I will also frequently send out class e-mails through Oncourse covering everything from changes in the schedule to announcements regarding instructor illness or inclement weather, so please get into the habit of checking our Oncourse page frequently (at least once every day). If you have any questions about how to access or use Oncourse, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Office of Disabilities Services

If you have a documented disability, please make sure you have submitted and received all necessary paperwork and that you let me know as soon as possible so that the appropriate arrangements can be made.

Course Schedule

KEY	
BF	Blakeslee and Fleischer, <i>Becoming a Writing Researcher</i>
OC	Reading posted to Oncourse (print, read, and bring to class)
UG	Undergraduate students only
MALS	MALS students only
TBA	Reading(s) to be announced

(Schedule is subject to change at instructor’s discretion with advance notice. Readings are “due” on the dates on which they are listed.)

WEEK 1: Course Introduction: Why Research?

January

M 07: Course introductions/expectations and icebreakers

W 09: OC, Frey et al., Ch. 1

WEEK 2: Our “Ur-Text”: Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* (1915)

M 14: BF, Ch. 1 and OC, MacNealy, Ch. 1

W 16: Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*, Part I and basic introduction to library databases, IUCAT, and ILLiad

WEEK 3: *The Metamorphosis*, continued

M 21: **No class (MLK, Jr. Holiday)** (Use JSTOR to find a scholarly journal article on *some* aspect of Kafka and *The Metamorphosis*—post to Oncourse with a two-paragraph explanation on why you chose this article.)

W 23: Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*, Part II and OC, TBA (dissect and discuss article)

WEEK 4: *The Metamorphosis*: Major Critical Approaches

M 28: Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*, Part III. Major research trajectories on Kafka and *The Metamorphosis*

W 30: **MALS Presentation I** on *The Metamorphosis*

WEEK 5: Research Boot Camp: What Is Library-based Research?

February

M 04: BF, Ch. 2 and discuss preliminary research questions (RJ). More in-class work with library databases.

W 06: OC, MacNealy, Ch. 2 and develop/share research questions in class

WEEK 6: Research Boot Camp, continued

M 11: BF, Ch. 3 (pp. 37-43) (*Problem statement assigned) and OC, TBA (dissect and discuss article)

W 13: BF, Ch. 3 (pp. 60-65) and OC, Kimme Hea, “Riding the Wave”

WEEK 7: Digital Research Tools—Databases and Beyond

M 18: Library Day (meet in library today) and OC, Rickly, “Messy Contexts”
W 20: OC, Spinuzzi, “The Genie’s Out of the Bottle” and ICA on observing an online forum

WEEK 8: The Literature Review

M 25: BF, Ch. 3 (pp. 43-49) and OC, TBA (dissect and discuss article). **Problem Statement due (UG) (5%)** (*Research Proposal and literature review assigned)
W 27: BF, Ch. 3 (pp. 66- 92)

WEEK 9: What Is Empirical Research?

March

M 04: OC, MacNealy, Ch. 3
W 06: BF, Ch. 4 and OC, IU’s IRB policies on Human Subjects

WEEK 10: Spring Break

M 11: **No class (Spring Break)**
W 13: **No class (Spring Break)**

WEEK 11: Empirical vs. Library-based Research: Evaluating Empirical Methods

M 18: **Research Proposal due (5%)** and **Literature Review due (UG and MALS) (15%)**. Share proposals and lit reviews in class.
W 20: OC, Burke, “Definition of Man”

WEEK 12: Ethnography and Case Studies

M 25: BF, Ch. 5 and OC, MacNealy, Ch. 10
W 27: OC, MacNealy, Ch. 11 and **MALS Presentation II** on Ethnographic studies. (Research proposals and Lit reviews returned in class.)

WEEK 13: Self-guided Library Research (Enjoy!)

April

M 01: **No class** (work on final projects)
W 03: **No class** (work on final projects)

WEEK 14: Surveys and Ethical Issues in Empirical Research

M 08: BF, Ch. 6
W 10: OC, Freedman, “Lies, Damned Lies, and Medical Science”

WEEK 15: Writing It Up: In-class Workshops on Final Projects

M 15: In-class workshops and BF, Ch. 7
W 17: In-class workshops

WEEK 16: Course Wrap-up and Reflection

M 22: Course evaluations, course wrap-up

W 24: **Final Projects due (UG and MALS) (35%); ***Final Project Presentations (MALS)**

*****Final Project Presentations (UG): W, 5/1 from 11:30am to 1:30pm (Both UG and MALS should attend.)**