

Course Information

SSM1100Y Research Paper 2015-2016
Thursday 2 pm – 5 pm
Room Location: L1220

Instructor Information

Course Description

This course is intended to provide students with the opportunity to conduct independent academic research on a topic that falls within the interdisciplinary fields of the MScSM program. It is not meant to be a thesis but should adhere to principles of excellent research. Students work on a research project in their area of interest, under the supervision of a faculty member with expertise and research interests in the topic area. Through semi-regular meetings with the course instructors, and in collaboration with the students' supervisor, students will work to identify potential research questions, apply methodological skills and research skills appropriate for addressing the research question, and conduct primary or secondary research. Finally, students write up their results in a full-length research report, and present their findings in an open forum to members of MScSM Program as well as interested members of IMI and the wider UTM community.

Course Objectives

The objectives of this course are to:

1. Develop research skills adequate to the addressing of a research question at an advanced level
2. Acquire knowledge and skills of methods of data collection and analysis
3. Develop critical and analytical skills and research habits
4. Develop writing and presentation skills appropriate for the communication of advanced academic research
5. Produce a research project that contributes to the literature on the chosen topic and that advances the field of academic knowledge

Course Format

The class does not meet every week. Some class times are set aside for student presentations. Scheduled classes are designed to boost your skills in research, writing and presentations and to give you additional opportunities to ask questions and discuss your progress with your classmates. The students complete a number of assignments over the course of the year, building up to the final research paper. **Students should meet regularly with their supervisors and should discuss each assignment prior to submission.**

Grading

The faculty supervisor and /or the course instructors grade all work and return assignments with comments within two weeks of submission.

Formal proposal	20%	Assigned by supervisor; confirmed by course instructors
In-class presentation	5%	Assigned by course instructors
First Draft	25%	Assigned by supervisor
Peer Review of First Draft	5%	Assigned by course instructors
Final Paper	30%	Assigned by supervisor and course instructors
Final Presentation	15%	Assigned by supervisor and course instructors

Submission Requirements

Research proposal (20%)

A formal proposal is due on October 16th. Submit two copies: send one to your supervisor and one to the course instructor assigned to your research paper. These may be in electronic form (PDFs please) but be prepared to supply a printed copy upon request. Ensure the document is clearly labeled and your name is on it (do not send a file called “SSM1100 Research Paper Proposal”!)

In-class Presentation (5%)

In the three weeks between **November 12-26**, every student must present an oral progress report in class. The presentation will be evaluated based on content and style.

First Draft (25%)

The first draft is due on February 4th. Submit two copies: send one to your supervisor and one to the course instructor assigned to your research paper.

Peer Feedback Review (5%)

Being able to provide feedback and to respond effectively to feedback on your research and writing is an important part of the research paper process. Students will be paired up to provide feedback to each other on the submitted first draft. **On Feb 11th**, please be prepared with written feedback to share with your peer. A rubric will be provided to you as a guide. Time will be given for pairs to exchange feedback and gain clarification on the feedback. Please hand in one copy of the feedback you have prepared for your peer to the course instructors for a grade.

Final Paper (30%)

The final paper is due April 2nd. Submit two printed and bound copies: send one to your supervisor and one to the course instructor assigned to your research paper. Any softcover binding is acceptable. Also, send a PDF to the MScSM Coordinator for archiving.

Alternative Options

With the permission of the course instructors and your supervisor, you may submit at least part of your research paper in a different form – such as a model (computer or physical), a piece of original software, a laboratory analysis, or a video. It must be accompanied by a paper that presents the analysis for your project: the problem you addressed and its significance for sustainability management, the method you used to arrive at the final product, the criteria used to test its validity or usefulness, and an evaluation of its performance in relation to the sustainability and/or management problem you identified.

Final Presentation (15%)

The final presentations will be scheduled from **March 10-24**. Presentation times will be assigned to students. Each presentation will be 15 minutes and will be evaluated based on content and style.

Professionalism

The ability to function professionally and to communicate in an appropriate manner is critical to success in any career field. We view each class as a professional meeting and thus, expect students to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times. Please show respect to your fellow students by attending, and being punctual for and attentive during all classes, presentations, and guest lectures, and by being actively involved in activities related to the course. Professionalism is also expected in all communications. Please also show professional courtesy and respect when interacting with your research paper supervisor. We will request a private meeting if we have concerns with your behavior.

Importance of Meeting Deadlines

The research paper is in some ways a rehearsal for professional and academic life in the future and you are expected to approach this assignment in a professional manner. In particular, this means that **you must meet all deadlines**.

Only in exceptional circumstances will your supervisor and the course instructors adjust the scheduled dates, and this will occur **only** if you have told the course instructor assigned to your research paper and your supervisor about your situation **well in advance**, and worked out a new deadline. If you simply let a deadline go with no advance explanation, you will reduce your grade by up to two points (changing a B+ to a B, for example, is a reduction of one point). Therefore, when in any doubt or difficulty, consult your supervisor and the course instructor **immediately**.

Consultations with Supervisor and Course Instructors

Your **supervisor** is your key contact. Meet with that person regularly and keep them informed of your progress or of any problems you encounter.

At least once a term you must make an appointment with the **course instructor** who is working with you for the year. These meetings give you an opportunity to discuss your progress and deal with any concerns or questions you have. The role of the course instructor is to help you **solve problems**, so make full use of this resource! And even if you don't feel you have any particular problems, it never hurts to describe your research to someone else – the more you talk about it, the more the ideas become clear in your mind.

The Research Paper – Step by Step

September 2015: Define your research question and choose a supervisor

The work you do in the first month may well determine whether you find the research paper experience enjoyable or difficult. Get started now. Talk to everyone you can about your ideas and read up on the topic. Meet up with your supervisor to get advice about what literature to review and get some additional guidance on the proposal phase of your project.

October 16: Submit formal written proposal

Write a proposal that includes ethics information and submit it to your supervisor and the course instructor assigned to your research paper. Write the proposal, revise it several times and get others to read it before you submit it. *A well-thought out proposal with a clear justification and method can save you considerable grief later on, so take this step very, very seriously.*

The purpose of the proposal is to initiate thoughtful reflection on your topic and a progress plan. In the second class, we will develop more detailed specifications for this document, but it will include, *as a minimum:*

- the research question(s): IT MUST BE A QUESTION, NOT A TOPIC;
- why the question is relevant to sustainability management theory or practice;
- the **methods** you plan to use to analyse the question;
- the **main sources of information** on the subject and where your work fits in;
- a timeline for conducting the research;
- the name of your supervisor;
- information on how your proposal research fits the **ethics protocol** (if it does) or if you will be seeking individual ethics approval.

All students should work closely with their supervisor in developing the research proposal.

Before October 31: Present the proposal to your supervisor

Negotiate a time to meet with your supervisor. You should give a brief oral summary of your proposal and answer question about it. These sessions are usually about 30 minutes long.

After your presentation, if your supervisor is satisfied, they will sign a form that will give you the go-ahead to start your research. **If there are problems with your proposal, your supervisor will ask you to submit a revised proposal before signing off.**

Any time in October or November

Make an appointment with the course instructor assigned to your research paper to discuss your proposal and research design, and any other questions you have.

November 12-26, during class time: Present your research topic and progress to the class

Give a 5-minute oral presentation of your research question and progress and answer questions about it from your fellow students. This will be a great opportunity to receive/provide feedback and suggestions from/to your colleagues. Three class periods will be devoted to presentations. Attendance is compulsory.

Any time in January or February

Make an appointment with the course instructor assigned to your research paper to discuss your progress. This is a good time to prepare a table of contents of the paper, and discuss the overall structure of your material.

February 4, 2016: Submit First Draft

Give your supervisor and the course instructor assigned to your research paper the first draft of your research paper. The supervisor should return the draft to you by February 18th at the latest. This draft will be assigned a mark that reflects your progress to date.

The paper should be tidy and clear, but do not waste hours on complicated formatting. Spend the time revising the content instead. If your topic demands special formatting, talk to the course instructor assigned to your paper *before* proceeding. General formatting requirements:

- **portrait** (not landscape) format;
- minimum **1-inch margin** on all sides;
- **NOT SINGLE-SPACED**: allow at least 4 extra points between the lines or use 1.5-line spacing;
- standard **font**: Times New Roman/Cambria (**12 point minimum**) or Arial/Calibri (**11 point minimum**); font can be smaller for tables, graphs, figures, and footnotes;
- tables and figures must be **numbered** and each one must be mentioned in the text;
- photographs must have a figure **number** and a **caption**;
- **no sidebars or text boxes** – all relevant information must be incorporated into the text;
- **colour** restricted to photographs, maps, infographics or charts, not used for decoration only;
- **no clip art** or illustrations that are not directly related to the topic.

March 3 to 24: Meet with supervisor to discuss feedback

Meet with your supervisor at mutually convenient time that you are responsible for arranging. You should meet in your supervisor's office or a quiet location on campus if at all possible. By the time of this meeting, you should have had received and reviewed and, ideally, started to respond to the written feedback on your First Draft. You should use the to receive any further feedback and seek clarification.

March 10 or March 17 or March 24 during class time

Each student will be scheduled for a drop-in presentation during class time. This is an opportunity to present your research to your peers and other interested members of the MScSM. Presentations must be no more than 15 minutes in length. There will be five minutes between each presentation to allow for questions from the audience. If you use PowerPoint, set it up in advance, so that your session starts right on time.

April 4: Submit Final Paper, covering memo, and PDF

The purpose of this final stage is to demonstrate your ability to respond constructively to suggestions, criticisms, and additional information from others- an important professional skill, since in the work world, it is rare that individuals work on documents in isolation.

Submit your paper to your supervisor and the course instructors on this date. The paper must be **complete**, including the abstract, appendices, and references, and must be **printed** and **bound**.

The main text of the paper should be no more than **12,000 words**. You can add appendices to include relevant information that does not fit into the body of the paper (these are not included in the word count). Provide all of the following:

- a detailed table of contents;
- a one-page abstract;

- a word count on the cover page;
- an automatically generated list of works cited in correct academic format (you may use EndNote, Zotero or the built-in citation system in Microsoft Word, but you must use a system to ensure that your references are correct and complete).

Three additional requirements:

- The final paper must be accompanied by a *memo* (point form is fine) that explains where and why you have made changes to the Final Draft in response to feedback.
- The copy that you submit to the course instructor must be accompanied by the **copy of the First Draft** that the instructor previously marked.
- Send a *PDF* of the final paper to the MScSM Coordinator for archiving.

If your paper was at or near the maximum **word count** at the first draft stage, and your supervisor has asked for additions, you may exceed the normal word count in the final version. If your first draft was well over the required word count, you may be asked to make cuts for the final draft.

If you would like to do more elaborate or distinctive formatting from that used for the final draft, you may do so in the final version of your paper. The only requirement is that the font must be large enough to read comfortably – minimum 11 points.

Questions?

There are many routes to completing this course, provided that you demonstrate the required skills, produce original and academically correct research, and meet the deadlines. When in doubt – ask! And the sooner you ask, the sooner you will have an answer.

Helpful Resources

Consult the following readings for assistance in developing your research proposal, writing your paper and preparing your final presentation.

Booth, W., G. Colomb and J. Williams. 2008. *The Craft of Research*, third edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Clark, Irene. 2011. *Writing the Successful Thesis and Dissertation: Entering the Conversation*. New York: Prentice Hall.

Hay, I., and Giles, P. 2011. *Communicating in Geography and the Environmental Sciences*. Toronto: Oxford University Press

Chapter 3: Writing an Annotated Bibliography, Summary, or Review

Chapter 9: Preparing and Delivering an Oral Presentation

O’Leary, Z. 2010. *The essential Guide to Doing your Research Project*. Los Angeles: Sage

Chapter 4: Developing Your Research Question

Chapter 6: Working with Literature

Chapter 15: The Challenge of Writing UP

You should read all literature that is pertinent to developing your research proposal and final paper.

Accessibility

U of T Mississauga and the AccessAbility Resource Centre are committed to the full participation of students with disabilities in all aspects of campus life. The [AccessAbility Resource Centre](#) provides academic accommodations and services to students who have a physical, sensory, or learning disability, mental health condition, acquired brain injury, or chronic health condition, be it visible or hidden. Students who have temporary disabilities (e.g., broken dominant arm) are also eligible to receive services. All interested students must have an intake interview with an advisor to discuss their individual needs. Students who require accommodation are advised to visit the AccessAbility Resource Centre as early as possible to have their needs assessed, as it may take some time to process the application.

For more information please contact the centre at: Rm. DV2047

Tel/TTY: 905-569-4699

E-mail: access.utm@utoronto.ca

Web: www.utm.utoronto.ca/access

Policy on Religious Observances

As noted in the [Policy on Scheduling of Classes and Examinations and Other Accommodations for Religious Observances](#), the following provisions are included:

“It is the policy of the University of Toronto to arrange reasonable accommodation of the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays.

Students have a responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences. Instructors will make every reasonable effort to avoid

scheduling tests, examinations or other compulsory activities at these times. If compulsory activities are unavoidable, every reasonable opportunity should be given to these students to make up work that they miss, particularly in courses involving laboratory work. When the scheduling of tests or examinations cannot be avoided, students should be informed of the procedure to be followed to arrange to write at an alternate time.

It is most important that no student be seriously disadvantaged because of her or his religious observances. However, in the scheduling of academic and other activities, it is also important to ensure that the accommodation of one group does not seriously disadvantage other groups within the University community.”

With respect to minimum advance notice, the Policy provides that "Students have a responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences." Since students would normally be aware of upcoming religious observances as well as examination schedules in advance, a minimum of three weeks advance notice will be considered sufficient.

More information and some dates of potential relevance for the U of T community are available at www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm. As with any academic accommodation request, students must submit an on-line Special Consideration Request @ <https://utmapp.utm.utoronto.ca/SpecialRequest>

Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity

It is your responsibility, as a student at the University of Toronto, to familiarize yourself with, and adhere to, both the Code of Student Conduct and the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. This means, first and foremost, that you should read them carefully. See www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Policies/studentc.htm. See also the University’s website on Academic integrity: www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity.

The Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters states that; “The University and its members have a responsibility to ensure that a climate which might encourage, or conditions which might enable, cheating, misrepresentation or unfairness not be tolerated. To this end, all must acknowledge that seeking credit or other advantages by fraud or misrepresentation, or seeking to disadvantage others by disruptive behaviour is unacceptable, as is any dishonesty or unfairness in dealing with the work or record of a student”

The Code also refers to expectations for faculty members, not just for students. It is our responsibility, as members of the faculty of the University of Toronto, to be familiar with these expectations and adhere to them. There are many additional academic requirements that we are expected to meet with regard to the integrity of course materials, returning of marked work to students, maintenance of student privacy, fairness, grading practices, and others. We make every possible effort to meet these expectations.

Tentative Course Schedule 2015/2016

First Term			
Week	Date	Activity	Work Due
1	September 17	Class: Overview and explanation of requirements	
2	September 24	Class: Preparing a proposal and research ethics	
3	October 1	Class: Proposal writing/conducting literature reviews (RGASC, FLC)	
4	October 8	Class: Self-editing skills (Professor Philippa Campsie)	
5	October 15	Individual meetings	Last day to submit proposal (Friday, October 16)
6	October 22	Individual meetings	
7	October 29	Individual meetings	Last day to present proposal to supervisor (Friday, October 31)
8	November 5	Individual meetings	
9	November 12	In-class presentations	Sign up for 5 minute slots
10	November 19	In-class presentations	
11	November 26	In-class presentations	
Second Term			
12	January 7	Individual meetings	
13	January 14	Class: Discussion of progress and format	
14	January 21	Class: Technical writing workshop	
15	January 28	Individual meetings and Drop-ins with RGAS	
16	Feb 4	Individual meetings	First Draft submitted to supervisor and course instructors
17	Feb 11	Class: Peer Feedback Review (RGASC)	
18	Feb 18	Reading Week	Receive written feedback from supervisor
19	Feb 25	Individual meetings	
20	March 3	Class: Preparing an Effective Presentation (RGASC)	
21	March 10	Drop-in presentations	
22	March 17	Drop-in presentations	
23	March 24	Drop-in presentations	Last day to meet with supervisor to discuss First Draft
24	April 4 (Monday)		Final Paper due (with covering memo). Submit to supervisor, course instructors, and MscSM Coordinator.