City University of Hong Kong

Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Information Systems
with effect from Semester A 2016 / 2017

Part I Course Overview

Course Title: Qualitative IS Research Methods

Course Code: IS8004

Course Duration: One Semester (13 weeks)

Credit Units: 2

Level: R8

Proposed Area:
(only for GE courses)

Arts and Humanities
Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations
Science and Technology

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites:
(Course Code and Title) Nil

Precursors:
(Course Code and Title) Nil

Equivalent Courses:
(Course Code and Title) IS8004M Qualitative IS Research Methods

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title) Nil
Part II  Course Details

1. Abstract

This course aims to equip IS research students with the necessary foundations and skills to evaluate and perform qualitative IS research at a postgraduate level.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>CILOs*</th>
<th>Weighting* (if applicable)</th>
<th>Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEC 1</td>
<td>Develop a strong sense of intellectual curiosity, challenge assumptions and positions, and engage in a shared process of enquiry.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC 2</td>
<td>Develop critical thinking skills associated with knowledge creation that can be applied to real-world problem solving.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC 3</td>
<td>Develop the ability to reflect on their own discovery and innovation process.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Explain the nature of contemporary qualitative IS research in the context of behavioural IS research and in relationship to quantitative research methods.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Describe current IS research directions, with a particular focus on qualitative methods.</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Apply appropriate qualitative methodologies to solve behavioural IS research problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Develop a research proposal following suitable qualitative research methodologies.</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.
# Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

A1: Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.
3. **Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)**

Seminar : 2 hours per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TLA</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
<th>CILO No.</th>
<th>Hours/week (if applicable)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TLA1: Seminar</td>
<td>The following items form the content of the seminar:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Introduction to and overview of qualitative IS research in the context of behavioural IS research and with reference to quantitative IS research.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Focused examination of specific qualitative research methods: including case studies, ethnography, and action research; modes: including hermeneutics, semiotics, narrative and metaphor; and qualitative data sources such as interviews, diaries, observations, documents and texts.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Detailed examination of selected qualitative IS research papers.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants are required to engage actively in discussion sessions during each seminar.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. **Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)**

Coursework : 100%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Tasks/Activities</th>
<th>CILO No.</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>DE C1</td>
<td>DE C2</td>
<td>DE C3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuous Assessment:</strong> 100%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT1. <strong>In-class participation, including discussion:</strong></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The seminar will be designed to include opportunities for students to explore and discuss different empirical and methodological issues associated with qualitative IS research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>AT2. <strong>Critical Analysis:</strong></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each student is required to present a critical analysis of one or more qualitative IS research papers.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT3. <strong>Proposal Development:</strong></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each student is required to develop a research proposal founded on a qualitative research methodology, demonstrating their ability to solve research problems.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* The weightings should add up to 100%.

5. **Assessment Rubrics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Task</th>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Excellent (A+, A, A-)</th>
<th>Good (B+, B, B-)</th>
<th>Adequate (C+, C, C-)</th>
<th>Marginal (D)</th>
<th>Failure (F)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AT1. In-class participation, including discussion</td>
<td>Ability to explore and discuss different empirical and methodological issues associated with qualitative IS research.</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Basic</td>
<td>Not even reaching marginal levels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT2. Critical Analysis</td>
<td>Ability to present a critical analysis of one or more qualitative IS research papers.</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Ability to develop a research proposal founded on a qualitative research methodology, demonstrating their ability to solve research problems.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Part III  Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1. Keyword Syllabus

1. Introduction to behavioural IS research: research designs and the roles of qualitative and quantitative methods; the evolution and status of qualitative IS research methods; the nature and characteristics of qualitative IS research, in comparison with quantitative IS research; areas of current qualitative IS research; characteristics of good qualitative research (with reference to standards for good quantitative IS research).

2. Conducting qualitative IS research: identifying a research problem; theory identification or building; research design and method(s) identification (whether quantitative, qualitative or a combination); measurement issues; specific research methods: case study research; action research; ethnography; data collection and analysis – texts, interviews, observations.

2. Reading List
2.1 Compulsory Readings

| 1. Nil |
2.2 Additional Readings

General


Action Research


**Ethnography**


See [http://www.qual.auckland.ac.nz/ethrefs.aspx](http://www.qual.auckland.ac.nz/ethrefs.aspx) for a longer list.

**Case Studies**


Hermeneutic Interpretation, MIS Quarterly, 18, 2, 143-157.


See [http://www.qual.auckland.ac.nz/case.aspx](http://www.qual.auckland.ac.nz/case.aspx) for a longer list