City University of Hong Kong

Information on a Course
offered by Department of Information Systems
with effect from Semester A in 2012 / 2013

Part I

Course Title: Qualitative IS Research Methods
Course Code: IS8004
Course Duration: One Semester (13 weeks)
Credit Units: 2
Level: R8
Medium of Instruction: English
Prerequisites: Nil
Precursors: Nil
Equivalent Course: IS8004M Qualitative IS Research Methods
Exclusive Courses: Nil

Part II

1. Course Aims

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)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>CILOs</th>
<th>Weighting (if applicable)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DEC1</td>
<td>Develop a strong sense of intellectual curiosity, challenge assumptions and positions, and engage in a shared process of enquiry</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEC2</td>
<td>Develop critical thinking skills associated with knowledge creation that can be applied to real-world problem solving</td>
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<td>DEC3</td>
<td>Develop the ability to reflect on their own discovery and innovation process</td>
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<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>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Describe current IS research directions, with a particular focus on qualitative methods.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Apply appropriate qualitative methodologies to solve behavioural IS research problems.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Develop a research proposal following suitable qualitative research methodologies.</td>
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</table>

(3: Relatively most focused ILOs; 2: moderately focused ILOs; 1: less focused ILOs)

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students’ achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

Seminar: 2 hours per week

TLA1: Seminar

The following items form the content of the seminar:

1. Introduction to and overview of qualitative IS research in the context of behavioural IS research and with reference to quantitative IS research.
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.
3. Detailed examination of selected qualitative IS research papers.

Participants are required to engage actively in discussion sessions during each seminar.
### ILO No. TLA 1: Seminar Hours/week (if applicable)

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<tr>
<th>ILO No.</th>
<th>Seminar</th>
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<td>DEC 1</td>
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<td>DEC 2</td>
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<td>DEC 3</td>
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<td>CILO 1</td>
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<td>CILO 3</td>
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<td>CILO 4</td>
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</table>

(1: Indirectly Supporting ILO; 2: Directly Supporting ILO)

### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

**Coursework:** 100%

**AT1.** In-class participation, including discussion (40%): The seminar will be designed to include opportunities for students to explore and discuss different empirical and methodological issues associated with qualitative IS research.

**AT2.** Critical Analysis (30%): Each student is required to present a critical analysis of one or more qualitative IS research papers.

**AT3.** Proposal Development (30%): Each student is required to develop a research proposal founded on a qualitative research methodology, demonstrating their ability to solve research problems.

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<tr>
<th>ILO No.</th>
<th>AT1 (40%)</th>
<th>AT2 (30%)</th>
<th>AT3 (30%)</th>
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<td>CILO 4</td>
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(1: Indirectly Supporting ILO; 2: Directly Supporting ILO)

### 5. Grading of Student Achievement:

Grading is assigned based on students’ achievement of ILOs in accordance to the defined grading criteria. Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A- . . . C-, D, F)
Part III

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.

Recommended Reading

General


Action Research


**Ethnography**


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

**Case Studies**


