

# AN INFORMATION LITERACY COURSE FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS: INFORMATION RESOURCES AND TOOLS FOR RESEARCH

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# COURSE BACKGROUND

- Started in 2012
- Turku University Library organizes the course in collaboration with the University of Turku Graduate School (UTUGS)
- Offers and co-ordinates training to all Doctoral Programs in all the seven disciplines present at the University of Turku and Doctoral candidates of the University
- Voluntary course
- Organized 4 times, twice in English and twice in Finnish
- UTUGS web pages:  
<http://www.utu.fi/en/research/utugs/courses/Pages/home.aspx>



# COURSE CONTENT 2014

- 15 hours of compulsory computer class sessions and lectures
- 4 compulsory assignments
- Course material and assignments are delivered and administered in the Moodle virtual learning environment
- 1 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) for completing the optional course (credit administration UTUGS)



# COURSE CONTENT 2014

- Course content is the same for all the disciplines, but due to the heterogeneity of the disciplines, the participants are divided into groups according to their subject specialty:
  1. science, technology and medicine
  2. humanities and social sciences
  3. business, economics, education and law



# COURSE CONTENT 2014

- 26.2.2014 Brush up session
- 5.3.2014 Building your search
- 12.3.2014 RefWorks
- 19.3.2014 Refining your search
- 26.3.2014 Lecture/seminar
- 2.4.2014 Keeping up
- <http://www.utu.fi/en/units/library/findasklearn/learn/utugs/Pages/home.aspx>



# COURSE COLLABORATION

## 1. Coordinator of the University of Turku Graduate School

- Planning
- Budgeting
- Marketing
- Credit administration
- Feedback questionnaire

## 2. Information specialists

- Seven information specialists in different subject fields (spring 2014)
- Collaboration in planning and teaching
- Preparation of course material
- Course feedback analysis

## 3. Other universities

- Sharing of course structure



# COURSE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

## General

- *“Thank you, this was a great course and I would recommend it for anyone who is involved in academic writing! ”*
- *“Keep on the good work!”*

## Assignments

- *“Course was really well prepared! And the assignments were helpful.”*
- *“Own assignments promoted learning during the whole course.”*



# COURSE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

## Databases

- *"Now I understand much better how to use databases and research tools."*
- *"I am sure that without this course I would not be able to find any information, especially in law."*

## Reference management

- *"My goal was to learn to use RefWorks and I did."*
- *"I have been using the resource several times a week ever since the lecture introducing it."*





# COURSE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

## Individual guidance

- *“I felt the lecturers were enthusiastic, well prepared and could give also attention to personal questions.”*
- *“The lecturers were extremely helpful and patient to guide me personally.”*

## Experience sharing

- *“I think it is useful to have these kind of courses and forums where PhD researchers from different faculties can share their skills and develop methods in conducting their research, such as data collection, using archives and online materials.”*



# COURSE FEEDBACK FROM STUDENTS

## Suggestions for future courses

- *“Recorded lectures would help in case when there are difficulties to participate in the training”*
- *“In my view, this kind of working could be also conducted online, with lync or similar telecommunication methods (this would be also an additional resource for research that could be practiced simultaneously)”*
- *“There could have been even more tasks during the classes”*



# COURSE FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS

## Heterogeneous groups challenging

- *If all researchers in the group are in Economics, it's easier than if you have a group of researchers in Musicology, in Linguistics, in Finnish History, in Sociology and in Political History.*

## Personal guidance rewarding

- *It feels good to have time for individual guidance.*



# COURSE FEEDBACK FROM TEACHERS

## Assignments time-consuming

- *Going through assignments and giving feedback to them is time consuming*
  - *Need for reminding about deadlines*
  - *Additions and modifications required*
  - *Assignment instructions need to be clear to all – challenging!*
- 
- *There is a great need for this kind of course – before 2012 there were no targeted courses for postgraduates.*



# CHALLENGES FOR TEACHERS

## Dropouts

- Dropout questionnaire spring 2014:
  - *"This time it did not fit in my schedule as I had planned, there were too many overlappings with other courses."*
  - *"It would be great that courses would be arranged so that they would be group with another course for the same day or be arranged with online or e-learning."*
- Only 3 answered



# CHALLENGES FOR TEACHERS

## Heterogeneous groups

- different disciplines
- different skills
- different life situations
- different backgrounds



# CHALLENGES FOR STUDENTS

## Finding search terms and designing search strings

- Although the research topic is clear, it's challenging to find relevant search terms and create effective search strings

## Finding the right database

- *"How do I know that I have searched all the relevant databases"*
- *"Which is the best database"*



# FUTURE PLANS

- The course has now established itself in the UTUGS course program
- Next UTUGS course will be arranged in spring 2015 in Finnish
- Online course in English in the end of 2014 for researchers in Business and Economics
- We will continue to develop the course based on the course feedback





# THANK YOU!

- QUESTIONS?



# CONTACT INFORMATION



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