

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH [BRIT 290]

FALL 2025

Instructor	David Green	Phone	+44 (0)1476403019
Office Location	British Faculty Offices	Email	dgreen@harlaxton.ac.uk
Course Meeting Days and Time	Tu: 4.00-5.15pm and tutorials by arrangement	Student Drop-In Office Hours	Tu/Thur: 1.00-2.00pm or by appointment
Course Mode	In-person		

Catalog Description

Interdisciplinary course involving a short guided research project and practical experience in research techniques (relevant to the arts, humanities, social sciences). This option pairs well with any of Harlaxton's signature British courses to help students develop a deeper understanding of a subject or area while gaining skills for future study. It will also be of benefit to students undertaking preliminary work for a senior thesis/capstone course, and those wishing to begin to explore a subject of interest within or outside their major while enhancing their wider academic skills through library research, writing and presentation workshops, editing and peer review. Students will undertake a research project comprised of a proposal, literature review, and poster presentation.

Credit Hour Policy Statement

Standard lecture: "This class meets the federal credit hour policy of 1 hour of class with an expected 2 hours of additional student work outside of class each week for approximately 15 weeks for each hour of credit, or a total of 45-75 total hours for each credit." (Def 1)

Course Learning Objectives

- Students who complete this course successfully will develop a range of research skills appropriate to the arts, humanities and social sciences, including library research, note taking, the organization of material/data, creating and structuring bibliographies, citation methods, and the composition of proposals and abstracts.
- It will also encourage students to extend their skills in critical analysis, and communication in various forms and media.

Methods of Instruction

Teaching Methods: Combination of seminars, individual tutorials, and peer review exercises.

Key Text(s) and Other Class Materials: Available through BlackBoard

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introductions

Week 2: Library research

Weeks 3: Research proposal

Week 4: Research proposal – peer review

Week 5: Literature review

Week 6: Literature review – peer review

Week 7: Writing workshops

Week 9: Writing workshop - peer review

Week 10-11: Presentation workshops

Week 12: Poster preparation

Week 13: Poster preparation

Week 14: Poster submission

Grading Criteria and Course Assessment:

To complete the course, students will undertake a research project comprised of a proposal, literature review, and poster presentation.

Assessed Work	Weighting	Submission Date
Class Participation	10%	
Proposal	30%	23 September
Literature Review	30%	14 October
Poster	30%	9 December

Plagiarism: Is the unattributed use of another person's work. This constitutes cheating. If you are quoting another person's words directly, they must be placed in quotation marks and cited. Whether deliberate or not, plagiarism constitutes very serious violation of the Honor Code.

Class Participation Rubric

Grade	Assessment Criteria
A	Consistently excellent contributions to seminar discussion throughout the semester, showing evidence of extensive preparatory reading, a high level of curiosity, engagement with a wide range of subjects, and an excellent understanding of the historical/cultural context of the topics under review.
B	Consistent engagement with seminar discussions throughout the semester displaying a fair level of preparatory reading, a clear interest in the subjects, and a solid grasp of key themes and the historical/cultural context of the topics under review.
C	Inconsistent contributions to seminar discussion over the course of the semester. Limited engagement with the subjects based on cursory preparation. Simplistic understanding of key themes and the historical/ cultural context of the topics underdiscussion.
D	Very limited engagement with seminar discussions. Poor understanding of key themes and a lack of knowledge ofthe historical/cultural context of the topics under discussion.
F	No positive engagement with seminar discussion, no evidence of preparatory reading.

Research Proposal

A research proposal makes certain that you have a worthwhile project and have acquired a good grasp of the relevant literature and the major issues, and that your methodology is sound. It shows that you have the competence and time to complete the project. It includes sufficient information to allow the reader/assessor/faculty member to evaluate the proposed study.

The research proposal explains what you plan to accomplish and how you are going to do it.

Required Elements

Your research proposal should be a minimum of three pages in length and include a section on each of the following areas:

- **Title:** this should be concise and descriptive.
- **Thesis statement:** this should be relatively extensive and certainly more than a single sentence.
- **Research questions / key points:** formulate your research questions and explain their significance. You should have a project which addresses questions/issues which are clear and sufficiently well-defined for you to complete within the available time.
- **Methods / Work Plan:** show how you plan to tackle your research problem; describe the activities necessary for the completion of your project.
- **Bibliography:** works consulted and required.
- **Questions for tutor:** issues still to be determined or which require further clarification.

Literature Review

A literature review outlines and evaluates the available scholarship that has been produced on a given topic or theme. A review differs from similar exercises (such as annotated bibliographies or critical analyses of primary and secondary sources) in several ways. First, the literature review does not merely describe a text or an academic's body of work: it examines and evaluates that work critically in relation to other works on the same topic. The focus of a literature review is governed and guided by an overarching research question, theme, argument or topic. By synthesising the body of work that is relevant to a particular topic in this way, a review of this sort establishes the available knowledge on a topic, defines the strengths and weaknesses of different works, and can help identify the main scholarly arguments, debates, research gaps and approaches relevant to the topic.

Grading Rubric

CRITERIA	A	B	C	D
Analysis	Demonstrates clear understanding of the topic and includes a variety of sources from high-quality journals and publications.	Demonstrates fair understanding of the topic and includes primary research articles from well-respected journals in the field.	Shows limited understanding of the topic. Over-reliance on low quality journals and/or a few sources are not reliable.	Shows poor grasp of the topic. Most sources referenced are unreliable.
Structure	Organizational plan enhances the presentation, promoting ease in reading.	Well organized with organizational plan obvious throughout.	Organizational plan is inconsistent.	No clear organization.
Writing	Contains no spelling or grammatical errors and demonstrates creative use of language. Uses quotations and citations to enhance the review. Makes smooth transitions between sentences and sections. Uses appropriate and correct means of citation.	Contains few spelling or grammatical errors. Uses quotations and citations appropriately. Links sections/paragraphs effectively. Few errors in means of citation.	Contains noticeable but not distracting spelling or grammatical errors. Reasonably effective use of quotations. Some awkward transitions between sections. Consistent errors in citations.	Contains numerous distracting spelling or grammatical errors. Lacks or uses quotations ineffectively or inappropriately. Poor transitions between sections. No recognised means of citation used.
Synthesis	Summarizes and synthesizes the literature effectively and notes gaps in and/or limitations of the research.	Summarizes the overall picture obtained from the literature review and synthesizes the knowledge gained.	Summarizes the overall picture obtained from the literature review but lacks synthesis.	Lacks summary or synthesis of the information, leaving each article as a standalone piece and/or misinterprets the information and/or makes statements unsupported by the literature.

Poster

Posters are a form of visual communication like billboards, print advertisements, and television commercials. These use rich images and comparatively little text. Charts, graphs, diagrams, photographs and other images can communicate your subject effectively. Make good use of colour and images, but try to avoid mixing different fonts or using too many colour schemes. Designing a poster enables you to develop a range of transferable skills as you build on your research to convey complex ideas in a striking and concise manner. Posters may be composed using Word, PowerPoint, Publisher or similar software and should be saved in a .PDF format.

Required Elements

Different subject matter will require different sorts of approaches and encourage the use of different types of images and levels of discussion. Each poster, however, should include the following elements:

- **Author and Title:** Place the title at the top of the poster (use a large font) - this should clearly and concisely describe the project.
- **Abstract:** Summarize your research in the abstract by (a) describing the research project, and (b) explaining your approach to the subject. This is, in essence, your thesis statement. Place the abstract in a prominent place (top centre or top left, under the title and authors). The abstract should be brief, engaging, and to the point. Make sure that the font size is large enough to be read easily from a few feet away.
- **Visual data:** In a visual medium like posters, charts, photos, and diagrams can effectively capture attention and describe your research project. Be sure to include short descriptions of your images so readers will know how each image relates to the study. Images need to do more than decorate the poster; they should explain and enrich your message.
- **Conclusions:** Summarize your findings to date and explain how your study sits alongside and contributes to existing research.
- **References:** Be sure to cite your most important sources (approx. 5) appropriately.

Poster Grading Rubric

	A	B	C	D
Organisation of material	Innovative & stylish. A well organised and striking poster that allows the viewer to easily navigate their way around the text and images.	Creates a good overall impression, with some imaginative elements & a logical organisation of material.	Some thought given to overall structure of the poster, but the structure is unimaginative and/or difficult to follow.	Haphazard presentation: little more than a random collection of images and words.
Image content	Thoughtful images used which expand on the abstract in an informative and engaging manner.	Appropriate images used which clearly engage with the project goals.	The images illustrate basic features of the project.	Images are poorly selected and add little to the thesis statement.
Image quality	Excellent throughout. Good use of colour.	Good quality images used that show care and attention to detail.	Images are of an adequate standard; a good size and clear.	Little effort shown; little attention to detail. Most of the images are of poor quality.
Textual elements	Excellent use of concise textual comments to extend & develop the abstract.	Mostly well written; relevant and concise prose.	Text is too extensive or too brief and/or adds little to the thesis statement.	Text does not explain the project at all clearly.

Withdrawal and Attendance Policies

Please see the Semester Calendar for the dates of the last day to Drop/Add a class and the last day to Withdraw from a class.

Student Absence

Harlaxton College expects regular class attendance by all students. Students are considered sufficiently mature to appreciate the necessity of regular and punctual attendance, to accept this personal responsibility and to accept the consequences of failure to attend. When absences occur due to emergency or medical reasons, students are expected to notify their instructors of the absence prior to class or to seek the assistance of the College nurse or a member of the Student Support Team for help in notifying instructors.

Instructors have the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons upon review of appropriate documentation and professional recommendation supporting such a request.

The Principal has the authority to grant excused absences for medical, psychological, or personal reasons.

Each instructor is expected to maintain an attendance policy in keeping with the nature of the Harlaxton program, and may consider it in evaluating performance in their courses.

Policy Governing Unexcused Absences

Harlaxton College operates an attendance policy that is binding on all faculty and students. The number of unexcused absences that are allowed before incurring a penalty is related to the number of times a class meets each week. For courses which meet three times a week, students are allowed a maximum of three unexcused absences during the semester without attracting penalty points. For courses meeting twice a week two such absences are permitted, and for courses meeting once a week a single absence is allowed. Additional unexcused absences will attract a grade penalty. This will be determined by the course member and included in their syllabus (e.g. a full-letter grade (A to B), or a third-letter grade (A- to B+).

Covid-19 Policy: Students should not attend class if they are feeling unwell. They should seek to notify their instructors of their absence and, if possible, participate in their classes online.

Policy Governing Excused Absences

Excused absences are not given to facilitate student travel independent of College-sponsored travel.

Students may be permitted to miss class because of participation in academic field trips.

If approval is granted:

- Missed class time due to student participation is to be considered an excused absence.
- It is the student's responsibility - to take the initiative by consulting with their instructors before the absence occurs, and - to do what is required by the instructor to make up all missed assignments and/or examinations.
- The grade of a student may not be lowered in any class due to excused absences.
- Instructors are required to assist students in these occasional situations of excused absences.

Disability Policy

It is the policy of the University of Evansville (Harlaxton College) to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. University of Evansville students should contact the Office of Counselling and Health Education to seek help with this. Students from Partner Universities/Colleges should contact their own relevant student support office.

Written notification to faculty from the College Secretary is required for academic accommodations to be implemented.

Honor Code

All students at the University of Evansville agree to the University honor code: *I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid, nor will I tolerate an environment that condones the use of unauthorized aid.*

Non-Discrimination Statement

The University of Evansville expects all members of its community to treat each other with respect and civility. Harassing behaviors directed towards any member of our community will not be tolerated. As part of its commitment to non-discrimination, the University specifically prohibits harassment based on any other characteristics set forth in its nondiscrimination statement as follows: including race, color, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, creed or religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status and all federally protected groups/classes. Any form of harassment undermines the mission of the University and negatively impacts the University community as a whole.

Prohibited Conduct and Confidentiality

The University of Evansville is committed to fostering an atmosphere free from harassment and discrimination. This commitment includes identifying problems that may lead to sexual harassment and misconduct, as well as other forms of harassment and discrimination, by creating an atmosphere in which the entire University community is sensitive to preventing prohibited conduct. Additionally, the University is committed to providing support and resources to individuals who have experienced prohibited conduct. This commitment includes effectively responding when a student, visitor, guest or program participant is the victim of prohibited conduct.

All campus employees, students, and guests are required to abide by the Title IX and Other Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy, the Harassment and Discrimination Policy, and the Consensual Sexual or Romantic Relationships Between Employees and Students Policy. Violation of these policies could result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion for students and termination for employees.

Faculty members at the University of Evansville are considered “Responsible Employees” under the applicable federal guidelines and the University’s policies. This means that I am unable to offer you confidentiality if you report any incidence of prohibited conduct to me as defined by Title IX statute. If I am made aware of a violation, I am required to report any known information to the Office of Institutional Equity.

You may choose to report the violation yourself the following ways:

Email: · Annie Sills, Assistant Director of Institutional Equity and Title IX Coordinator: cs175@evansville.edu ·

Keith Gehlhausen, Executive Director of HR and Institutional Equity: kg77@evansville.edu ·

Title IX: titleix@evansville.edu

Phone: 812-288-5261

Online: <https://www.evansville.edu/safety/report.cfm>

You may also choose to speak with a Confidential Resource. Confidential Resources are required to maintain confidentiality and cannot report violations to the Office of Institutional Equity: ·

University of Evansville

- Counseling Services: counselingservices@evansville.edu, 812-488-2633
- Health Center Professionals: healthcenter@evansville.edu, 812-488-2033
- University Chaplain: chaplain@evansville.edu, 812-488-5262

Harlaxton College

- College Nurse: Lesley Selby, RGN, +44 01476 403027, lseyby@harlaxton.ac.uk
- Counselling Services: counselling@harlaxton.ac.uk